

From The Bad  
To The Whatever

By

George J. Peters

FAMILY  
HISTORY  
PETERS



# *From The Bad To The Whatever*

by

*With Love  
George J. Peters*

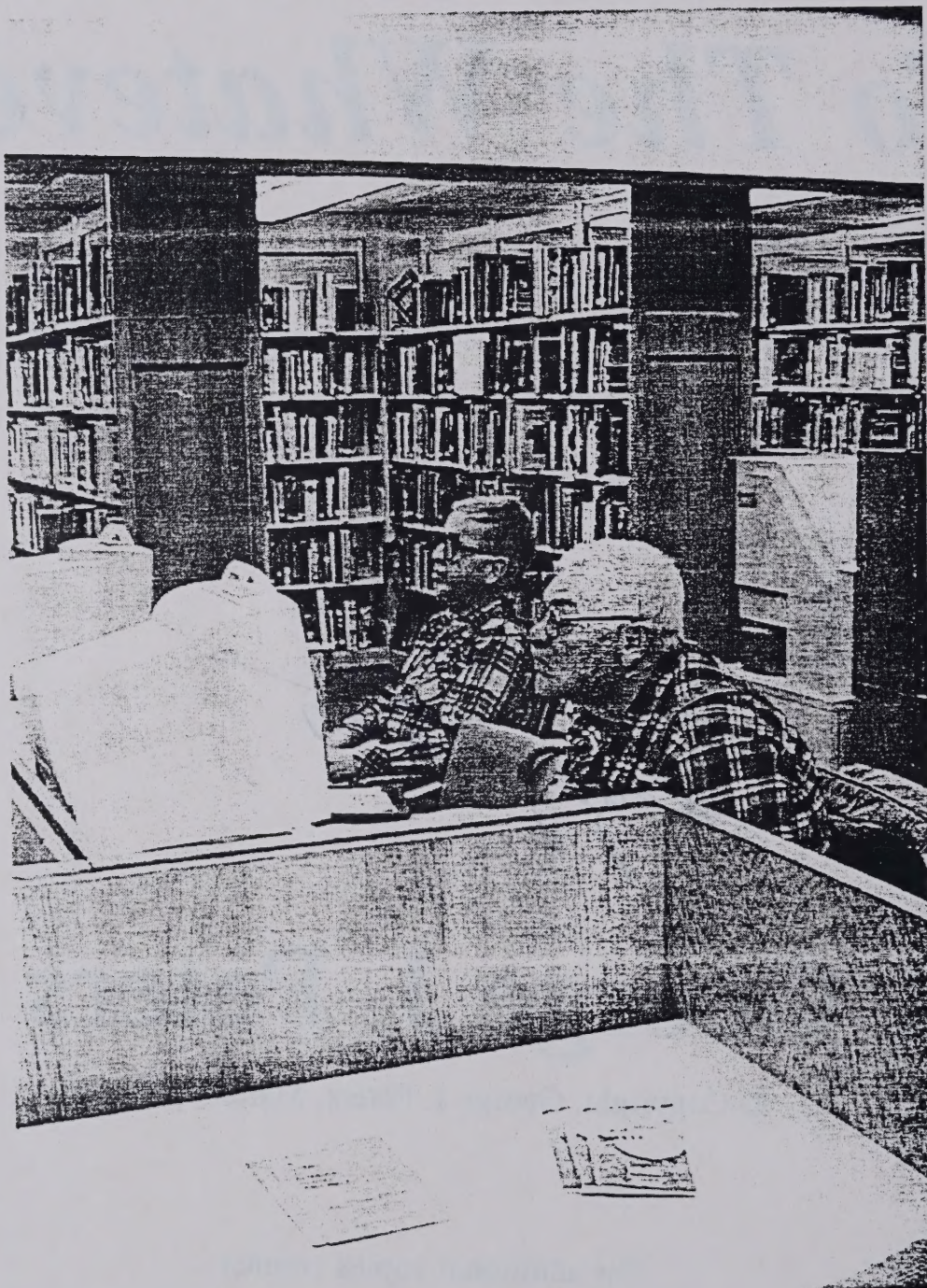
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George J. Peters, author, is on the right.

## " FROM THE BAD TO THE WHATEVER "

### Chapter One

I was born in what I believe was then known as the Bonnell Souder hospital in Auburn Indiana, October 11<sup>th</sup>, 1935. At this time my parents lived at 1613 S. Sprout St. in Auburn Indiana. My father as far back as anyone can remember, always had a drinking problem. My mother and my Aunt Lee told me that when I was born, my father was out drinking and not at the hospital. I was supposed to have been named after him however they were not really sure of what exactly to do and so they had me named George Junior Peters whereas my father's full name was George Walter Peters. My name was supposed to have been George Walter Peters Junior however the birth certificate reads George Junior Peters. We moved to Fort Wayne when I was 18 Mos. Old and we lived somewhere on Russell Avenue around the year 1937. We then moved to Quincy and Franklin street in Garrett Indiana around 1939 when I was around four years old and we resided

there approximately three years. It was sometime during this period that I remember it was in the summer time in the night when something which I believe was a mouse bit my foot and my mother said they could not find a bite mark on me, however to this day I cannot sleep without something on or over my feet. We then moved East of Auburn Indiana to Jackson Center on County road 60 and we lived there until around 1942. I remember a truck used to come up the gravel road in front of our house that had candy, food and household implements for sale, it was similar to the Jewel T. truck, and mom would buy groceries and candy from the driver. At this home we had an outside toilet which was known as an outhouse and one day when my father was using it, he got trapped inside of it by one of our neighbor's big boar hog which had broken through the fence and he couldn't get out until the farmer who owned the hog was notified, came over and made the hog go home. It was not too long after this that we again moved, this time to the 100 block of North Cowen St. in Garrett and we lived there until sometime in 1942. Now it was sometime in the late 30's or early 40's that my father was driving his vehicle from Garrett to Fort Wayne and he was driving with his arm resting on the open window when his vehicle was sideswiped by a truck and destroyed his elbow. The doctors at that time wanted to amputate his entire arm but he wouldn't let them, and he somehow managed to get in touch with a doctor in Fort Wayne who was able to graft a bone from his leg onto where the elbow used to be and making a sort of elbow in its place, I am mentioning this because this type of surgery was not really being done in this time period. During the 40's my mother went to work at this factory in Auburn

Indiana working the night shift and my Grandmother and Grandfather Peters would baby sit my brother and I. They would listen to the radio every night, people did not have television at this time and this was how I got acquainted with radio personalities like Judy Canova, Dina Shore and shows like The Inner Sanctum, Suspense, Archie's Tavern and many radio shows that most people of today never heard of.

My Grandparents had a German shepherd dog who's name was Pat, there were some people who thought he was a mean dog, however I remember him as only being protective. He only growled at people when he thought they were threatening someone in our immediate family and I never knew of him actually biting someone. My grandmother used to smoke a pipe and I remember one day when I was visiting her , she accidentally put her hot pipe ashes on the poor dog's back and burnt off some of his fur. At a later time as the U.S. entered into world war 2 , Pat was sent into the Army to join the K.9 Corps , later Grandma and Grandpa received a letter from the war department telling them that Pat had died during his training period.

Like everyone else during the war we received food and gas ration stamps from the government , they were based on the size of your family and what the head of the family's occupation was. I remember that Oleo margarine came in a plastic pouch with an orange button in it and the margarine was white until you kneaded this orange button and the color mixed with the margarine turning it yellow like the color of butter. When we didn't have any margarine or any of the ration stamps to buy any, we would lightly butter bread with lard and sprinkle salt on it, also if we had sugar we would pour coffee

on it and sprinkle sugar on top.

My father wasn't able to join the service because of his damaged arm and my grandfather was too old. I remember my grandfather used to tell me stories about when he was a special police officer in Chicago, he had a badge that was shaped like the old western sheriffs, a silver badge shaped like a star with the words Chicago special police imprinted into it. Today these badges are highly collectable items, he also had a solid brass police whistle on a chain that attached to his belt and two small revolvers with holsters. My father got these things when my grandfather passed away, then at a much later time my mother sold these things to me for bingo money, she was really addicted to playing bingo.

I remember in one of the stories my grandfather told me, that back when he was a police officer during the evening hours a man robbed this liquor store and the owner shouted for help and also tripped this audible alarm and grandpa started chasing the suspect. This guy was running right down the middle of the street, as this was late at night and there were no other vehicles on the street except for this trolley which was traveling in the same direction the suspect was traveling. Grandpa said he stepped on the step of the trolley and the robber continued to run down the middle of the street until becoming totally exhausted he fell down, grandpa then stepped off the trolley and arrested him.

I bought an Indian doll from my mother that had originally belonged to my grandparents. My mother told me this story as to how my grandfather had received this doll.

She said he used to buy and sell junk and automobiles both running and non-running . There was a time when this family of Canadians had the car break down and grandpa sold them parts to get their car running again, however they didn't quite have enough money to pay for these parts but they had this Indian doll with a papoose on it's back that they said had been made by these Indians in Canada, so they worked out some form of trade with grandpa which included the doll. After I had the doll for many years I did some research on it and found that it actually had been made by Indians living in Canada. So the chances are that this story is probably true and that is how the doll was obtained. My mother eventually sold it to me for bingo money and my wife fell in love with it. That is why we kept it for such a long period of time however after my wife passed away there were so many sad memories around the house ,as this doll was one of them I sold it to a friend of mine who's wife collects original Indian items. I promised him that I would write this story for him to put with the doll but never got around to doing it , so Mr. and Mrs. Charles Dittmer here is the story of the doll which I had promised you.

## Chapter Two

In 1945 we moved to 112 1/2 West King street in Garrett Indiana, this was an upstairs three room apartment with the rest room located at the top of the stairs on the right just before you entered the apartment. During the winter sometimes the pipes would freeze and we would make a homemade torch out of rolled up newspapers to thaw them out. The people who rented the ground floor apartment were allowed to use a garage which was located directly behind the house whereas we were allowed to use a room connected to the back of the house on the ground floor to store our wood and coal for the Morning Glory stove which heated our apartment in the winter. The people who lived downstairs were real good friends with our family with the exception of my father whom they stayed away from because of his unpredictable behavior when he was drinking.

These neighbors had four children ,three girls and one boy and I had a crush on the youngest girl however she was older than I and ahead of me in school thinking of me only as a friend. She later got married, had children and sadly passed away with cancer.

Now most of my father's money went to pay his bar bills and purchase more liquor so that my mother had difficulty paying bills and buying food. At this time there were three children in our family , I had an older sister and a younger brother, later my mother had another girl and another boy making our family size seven people in all. My older sister was living with my grandmother on my mom's side of the family. She lived near a Dairy on the South end of Auburn Indiana, she died of breast cancer while I was still very young and my sister who was living with her went to live with our Aunt until such time as she got married. My sisters name was Hazel Marie , my brothers name is Harry E.

A younger sister was born August 12 ,1945 and a younger brother was born 5.21,1952

when we were kids I remember we used to go up and down alleys picking up discarded pop bottles and milk bottles , selling them at one of the many grocery stores in our town. You received two cents for each pop bottle and five cents for the milk bottles. We would use this money to buy tickets to go to the swimming pool, go to the movies or buy candy. On Saturdays the Gala theatre [ which is still there today ] used to have a special all cartoon feature for children which cost only ten cents per child. Although this theatre has recently been modernized it still retains some of it's original charm and features both inside and outside just as it was in the 40's and 50's.As I had mentioned before my mother never had any amount of money and most of our clothes were picked up at yard sales, church sales anywhere they were cheap. My mother had a lot of friends who helped her whenever they were able. Some people used to hire her to clean their homes and she used to make homemade type yeast long john's like they make in bakeries and people would buy them giving her extra money that my father never found out about. I loved to go to the movies whenever I could get the money together. We had two theatre's in Garrett when I was growing up, one was the Gala and the other was the Royal. The Royal was located near our city hall and I remember going to it mostly on the weekends because it showed a lot of the old western movies like Roy Rogers, Gene Autry ,Tom Mix, Lash Larue,Sunset Carson,Whip Wilson, Johnny Mack Brown who also was a great football player before his movie career, Charles Starrett who played the Durango Kid, Duncan Rinaldo who was known as the Cisco kid, William Boyd who most people remember as

Hopalong Cassidy, and at that time there were actually five Lone Rangers, one of them Clayton Moore actually made the movies while the other five made personal appearances all over the country. The Royal theatre also ran a weekly serial like ,the Perils of Pauline, Flash Gordon starring Buster Crabb and others. When I was a kid and I went to a scary movie at night I would be scared walking home in the dark and even though it was only a few blocks, I had to pass buildings and alleyways that were frightening to kid with my type of imagination, so to bolster my courage I would whistle as I walked past these places. One night I met the Pastor of the Baptist Church which I attended and he asked me what I was doing and after I had explained it to him, he said do you realize that if someone where really going to get you that your whistling would tell them exactly where you are? For some dumb stupid reason I had never thought of that and from that day I never whistled going home from the movies at night.

One day on a summer Sunday when most things were closed, some of us kids broke into a school house located North of Garrett at an area we called the mile corner. This was a country two story school house with a full basement. We took the fire extinguishers and had battles spraying each other with them and we got soaking wet, I took my clothes off and hung them up so they would dry, in the meantime I took this U.S. flag off the wall and wrapped it around me. At this time we heard someone entering the building through the front door and we went out the back door leaving my clothes behind. Then I had to sneak through town wearing only my underwear under the U.S. flag, fortunately it was dark enough and by traveling in the alleys behind the houses I managed to not only get

home but also get upstairs and put on some clothes before mom saw me . To my knowledge the other persons involved in this incident never told anyone about this incident but I believe it was turned into the authorities and in the clipper because of the vandalism, the missing flag and they discovered my clothes. I will mention at this time that this school house has been long ago torn down and there is now a place that sells recreational vehicles located in about the same site. Since as I mentioned before , we seldom had any money and mom had to be super thrifty with any money that she made, we were not able to go or do a lot of the things other children did, for example we would get to go to the free fall fair in Auburn Indiana maybe only once during the entire week that it was there. We usually didn't have money to spend on anything and we had to stay with mom so she would know we were not getting into trouble which you may have noticed we did quite often. One night my brother and I stayed awake until our parents were sleeping and then we stole out of the house and we were walking along this highway to go to the fair in Auburn when this automobile stopped and it was the police and when they found out we were trying to go to the fair, they informed us that the fair wasn't even open at that time of night and they took us to the police station. Then one of the officers went to our home and after waking our parents asked them if they knew where their children were? When my mother found we were not in our bed , my father got dressed and took us home, he said very little about this incident at this time until the weekend when he got drunk then he came home and woke my brother and I beating us with his belt, leaving the letter G printed into my back for a long time after.

### Chapter Three

. The Auburn rubber Company used to take sheets of damaged toys to the Auburn dump to dispose of them. There were sheets of rubber tractor farm tractor bodies , all kind of wheels, untrimmed cars, trains , rubber horseshoes and all kind of toys which had some type of defect. They would be dumped over the side and set on fire, some burning and some not. We would take the better ones and put them on our wagon and take them home putting them in our bedroom. Mom would usually find them the next day and take them downstairs and burn them in the burn barrel behind the house.

One of our neighbors used to have a real mean bulldog and one Sunday morning this dog came after me trying to bite me , I jabbed at it with this broomstick and it clamped it's teeth on the end of that stick and wouldn't let go. I then dragged it to where these stairs went up the outside of this two story apartment building. I backed up those stairs with that stick and the dog hanging on the end of it until I was at the top landing, then I threw the stick with the dog still clamped to it as far as I could. I don't believe that dog the rest of it's life hit the ground the way it did that day. The dog survived but I'm sure it never forgot me for after that whenever the dog saw me, he would run and hide until after I had Passed.

My parents were not church people but us kids were, and I know they were as glad to see us leave for church on Sunday mornings as we were to leave. I loved to hear the pipe organ play in our church, they also had an old foot pump organ in the basement, I could never pump it long enough to play it very long.

There was one Sunday morning I was coming home from church and at a house near where my Aunt Lee lived , I saw something under these porch steps upon closer inspection I saw that it was a sealed fifth of whiskey, I would guess that someone had set it out there maybe to chill since it was cool that morning. I picked it up and as I was walking up the stairs to our apartment I hid the bottle under my shirt to smuggle it past my mother, however as I was going through the dinning room it slipped out from under my shirt and broke on the floor, you could almost instantly smell it throughout the entire apartment. My father asked me what had happened and I explained it to him, since I did not drink at that time , to this day I do not know what I was going to do with it.

One time we made a homemade cannon , which was a pipe with one end plugged shut and a hole drilled into the pipe on that end and the other end left open, then we put carbide powder in it that we got from the B. & O. roundhouse ,then some paper wadding and then we put in a steel ball that had been removed from a pin ball machine ,then you would put water in the drilled hole, which reacted with the carbide then when you applied a match to this hole it became a powerful little cannon. One day my cousin cookie had this miniature cannon mounted on this wagon, however he substituted gun powder in place of the carbide and while he was over by the roundhouse were the steam engines were as he was going past one of them he fired his cannon and it penetrated some type of steam unit on the train putting a hole in it letting steam come out. The railroad people took Cookie away and I later heard that the police had his wagon with the cannon.

Now the railroad used a thing that they attached to the rail which they called a torpedo

This was a small square unit with metal straps on it, which had some form of explosive material inside of it and when the wheels of the train ran over it, it would make this loud explosive sound, which is where I would guess they got the name from. When these torpedo's exploded they conveyed some form of information to the engineer of that train, like maybe slow down or something of that nature.[ I could research this and find out exactly why they were used, but this is a story about me and what I knew at the time so I did no research]. I mention this torpedo because if you were to take it apart like I did, you would find inside this red wrapping was this hard yellow powder type material and if you were to break off a very small piece of it and strike it with a hammer it would sound like a gun going off with a heck of a kick. Now one day , being more curious then intelligent I hit one of these torpedo's with a sledge hammer , the force of the explosion drove the sledge hammer out of my hand with such force that it went over my head and right through the window of my uncle's car. I let him think that the hammer had slid out of my hand by accident and never told him about the torpedo.

There was a time that I remember this lady had this grocery store here in Garrett and she had all these chickens that were left over from a sale at her store which she gave to my mom . We had fried chicken ,baked chicken, barbecued chicken but most of them were made into chicken pot pies and to this very day I cannot stand the taste of a chicken pot pie.

My brother, my cousins and I used to go out west of Garrett to a gravel pit which we knew as the B. & O. pit.

Whether the railroad owned it or not I really never knew . We would fish, skinny dip and swing on the vines like Tarzan. Now one of my cousins whom I have mentioned earlier, was a very special person and I was very attached to him, for he was the brunt of many jokes and pranks and he like me was always in trouble. His nickname that everyone knew him by was Cookie and I will be mentioning him all through this story.

I recall one time we were at the B.& O. pit with a campfire burning and preparing to fry some very small fish we had caught when Cookie suggested that we might want to move away from the fire. When I asked him why, he informed me that he had just poured an entire box of 22 long rifle bullets into the fire because he wanted to see what they would do. There was always excitement and wild things happening around Cookie. Most of those bullets did not make explosive sounds as they went off but you could hear them making whistling noises as they went through the air and you could hear them hitting the trees now and then. We discovered that day what would happen if you dumped live ammo in a fire. There was another time when only Cookie and I were at the B.& O. pit and I climbed to the top of this very tall tree that was growing beside the water, I was swaying back and forth shouting at Cookie who was watching me and just as the top of the tree was leaning over the water it broke and I fell onto my back on the water. I hit the water so hard landing on my back that I temporarily could not breathe luckily I landed on my back or I think I would have drowned as I floated out there I really couldn't move under my own power and Cookie was running back and forth on the shore shouting Cousin are you all right ?

For a long time I couldn't answer him because I wasn't able to catch my breath, all I could do was float around and whisper that I was all right, eventually I was able get to shore and assure him I was all right..

There were a lot of people who played a lot of cruel tricks and pranks on Cookie, however he was not without cunning of his own and occasionally pulled some pretty good pranks of his own. Cookie and I were always in some kind of trouble. One time we were throwing rocks at each other and ducking behind the burn barrels and trash barrels, when I threw half a brick at him he stood up and it struck him right in the forehead I really thought I had killed him that time ,it knocked him unconscious but somehow he survived.

## Chapter four

The B.& O. Railroad had steam engines when I was a kid ,they were called locomotives and as they were constantly being repaired much like automobiles, this was done inside a building known as a roundhouse, which was a building formed in half a circle with the back open , it had bays where the engines would straddle these pits where the people could work on the undercarriages from beneath the engines. From time to time the boilers had to be rebuilt , the wheels had to be relined or replaced and they did this in the roundhouse . In order to get the trains lined up to go into these separate they used a device called a turntable.

The locomotive would be driven unto this unit and it would turn until the the engine was lined up with the proper set of tracks to enter into the roundhouse. This unit was controlled with a single control lever which made it either go right or left. Well one day they had a train on this unit and the engineer turned it until he had it lined up with the bay it was going into and then for some reason he walked into the roundhouse and I wandered unto the turntable and was messing with the controls a little bit, at an earlier time when no one was around I had moved it making it go around but it was empty then without the train and I had to know how it felt with the engine on it. I had just moved it a little bit when I saw the Engineer coming back ,then he turned to say something to someone behind him and I ran off the turntable and out of sight I watched what happened next. You see I didn't get it back lined up like it was before and for some reason the engineer somehow didn't see this and he got up in the train and started it

slowly forward off the turntable and when the front wheels of the engine didn't quite line up with the tracks the front of the engine jumped the track, other people came and talked about the problem then they just simply real slowly backed it back on the turntable, I got out of there before they saw me.

We had an ice plant on the Northeast part of town on the North side of the railroad tracks where they froze water into large blocks of ice, some of them were crushed and put into special box cars that carried perishable items like fish, vegetables and items like that., they would also put these blocks of ice into a truck for delivery into peoples homes. these chunks of ice had notches cut into them and the ice man would take different sized chunks off this block and carry them into the homes with a set of hooks called ice tongs. People at this time had ice boxes and not refrigerators , and they would put this card in their window and depending on which numbers were up the ice man knew how big a piece of ice they needed for their ice box by seeing this card from the street. He would chip this size piece of ice off the larger block and carry it to were the ice box was they would pay him for it and he would on to the next house. Sometimes my mom would forget to put the card in the window or she would run out of ice at times when the ice man didn't come. When this happened my brother or I or maybe both of us would have to take our wagon across the tracks to that ice plant and buy a piece of ice. In order to try and keep the ice from getting dirty and slow down the melting process we put a burlap bag on top of the ice . A lot of the times we did this we would have to wait for one of these freight trains on the tracks and this was awesome to us

standing there watching these monstrous locomotives [ sometimes two of them together , this was called a doubleheader ]. They would start off real slow with great belches of smoke with each chug , then sometimes the wheels would spin and they would go chuga, chuga, chuga real fast and the ground would shake ,the black smoke would belch out of the smokestacks and you would hear and feel the ashes falling from the smoke, these locomotives were heavy, powerful and everything got dirty from their smoke.

As I write this story I'm going to tell you things that I and others did and in most cases mentioning their names would not be right ,so I will either change their names or not mention them at all also a lot of the buildings, stores and places that will be mentioned are long gone and just memories , partly because I'm 63 years old and partly because they were already old when I was young. Some of the places that are gone are the roundhouse, the Garrett railroad station, the Garrett Hotel, The will Franks Grade school, the gymnasium , the creek chub bait company, Harris Hoeffel's Store, Bunk's restaurant , Izzy's Pool hall ,Little's hardware [ which the building became a church], there were six or seven different grocery stores that are gone one of which is now a video store and the previously mentioned Royal theatre , two different drug stores and there are other places which I don't even remember that are also gone.

There was a time when my mother was visiting Margie Hufferman's home and had us kids along [ my brother and I ], They lived on the North Side of the Railroad tracks across from the Dairy and had a barn , some pigs, chickens and did some farming and their barn caught fire and when the fire department came , they made us kids get in the

house until it was over but all the animals were killed and the barn was totally destroyed .

From time to time I will be telling things that I did which were bad ,like stealing things these things are in here because they are a part of my life, I cannot change them erase them or make them go away but I can tell you how I feel about them today , for example I feel there is no excuse for stealing anything, however you or others may think there are circumstances which might rationalize doing this and you may even be forgiven for doing it, however the thing you must always remember is that you did it in the first place and knew it was not right. Admitting that you did it and not doing it again is how you improve yourself because anyone can make a mistake but those who admit the mistake and learn from it are the ones who will actually go forward in life. I always think that I have something important to say however the truth is that most people already know what I am saying, they either don't consider it important or don't care in the first place. I would like to think that just one person could find something in my story to somehow better his or her life . Not making the mistakes that I had made in my earlier life would have really made my later life a little easier, now having said this I will continue with my story.

One hot summer day when I was going to the ice plant to get ice, when I was on my way home, I was passing this freight terminal where the railroad was loading this box car and I watched this worker bring these boxes of candy bars into the boxcar with a handcar , then he would go get another load. Normally the door on my side of the boxcar would be closed but that day it was open probably because it was such a hot day, while

he was getting another load I stole one of the boxes and put it under the burlap bag next to the ice. It's very possible that he never even missed that box of candy and even though it tasted very good at that time it still wasn't the right thing to do.

There used to be a place out where the Garrett schools are now located that used to be a fenced in area with a building in the center where they used to raise and train horses. Inside the barn were stables and straw and items related to the horses. My cousin Cookie , my brother and I used to sneak over there when no one was around and ride these horses bareback , they were very docile. One Evening as it was getting dark Cookie was riding one of the horses , my brother and I were throwing things at the horse and the horse became startled it bucked and threw Cookie off and appeared to have broken his wrist. My brother and I had taken first aid training in the Boy Scouts and we put a splint on it and took Cookie up to the clinic in downtown Garrett. Cookie's parents were notified and the doctors had to set it and put a cast on it. I truthfully believe on that hot summer night everyone in Garrett thought that the doctors were killing Cookie when they were setting his wrist.

There was another time when we were going down this alley and we spotted this safe inside of a garage with the garage door opened and as I was messing with the door on the safe it opened. The safe was full of wrist watches and pocket watches and we stole them. Now remembering that we were kids that had never had or owned a watch suddenly had a whole bunch of them so when we went to school the next day we wore

watches on both arms . We really thought that was cool however someone mentioned this to the teacher and the teacher notified the principal who called the police to investigate and we were taken into custody and the watches were returned to the lady who owned them, it turned out that her husband had been in the watch repair business but he had died as she really was a very nice lady she didn't press charges against us. One time when we were supposed to have been in school, two of us played hooky and we joined with an older boy who didn't go to school at this time . We entered into this church and in the church we found this glass jar which was full of change it was then that we heard the front door open. We were on the second floor and this person was coming up the back stairs at this time the older boy who was with us ran down the front steps and out the front door. The person who had come up the back stairs [ we later found out was the minister] heard the boy go out the front door and he took all of those stairs in two steps and caught the older boy. All of this bought us other two some time and we used it to get away however we still had the jar of money . As we were afraid of getting caught with it , we buried it beside an abandoned car in a vacant lot between two buildings. At a later date the car was removed and we couldn't remember exactly where it was , so it could very possibly still be there today.

On another time during the summer a boy who was a friend of ours stole some money from his mother's purse . We went to the hardware store and bought some bee bee guns with it and as we were going to the B.& O. pit to shoot them we ran into a problem.

We were going west on Quincy street ,the other boy and I were Ahead of my Brother and we were beside what then was the Garrett Coal Company [ which is gone today ] when these older boys who were passing by said something to my brother and he said something back. The older boy started hitting him as they were older and larger than us without considering the consequences I started shooting the B B gun at them. I don't know if I hit them or not because they ran away, however I did happen to put four B B holes through the large plate glass window in the front of what then was McGlaughlans auto parts store [ which today is the NAPA store] the owner called the police who contacted our parents, the B B guns were returned to the hardware store and the boy's mother's money was returned and there was a way to temporarily repair the holes in the plate glass window.

On another occasion when I was skipping school I went into the Methodist church and was messing around with their organ when I somehow accidentally turned the outside speakers on and as I was playing with the chimes at this time inside the church I was also doing it through the speakers outside the church , as I mentioned before in my childhood I was not real smart.

My childhood however was not always doing bad things , I was in the boy scouts trying to learn to do the right things and my scoutmaster Mr. Woodcox [ he also taught shop in school ] asked me if I would like to go to camp in the summer time , I believe it was called Camp Big Island because that name is in my memory. This would be a week of living in cottages , with swimming and different types of sports and outdoor things .

Then Mr. Woodcox made arrangements with a Mrs. Mounts who was a nice Lady who's husband had been a Lawyer in Garrett and she would pay my way if I would do some gardening and landscape work around the outside of her house. I did all of the work she asked for and she paid for my week at Camp Big Island, this was one of the better memories of my childhood. I might mention at this time that Mr. Woodcox was always doing things like helping kids that he knew were having difficult times, he was one of the more outstanding people I remember from my childhood.

One time when we were having a Boy Scout Jamboree outside of Auburn Indiana, I think it was called Camp Puree or something like that, we pitched our tents and were there Saturday and Sunday. On Sunday morning as the scouts from my troop were sitting around the campfire frying breakfast one of the pans which had bologna in vegetable oil in it caught fire and the scout holding the Pan was startled, he stood up and tripped and accidentally poured that burning oil down the side of my face, burning my face and my right eyelid. Fortunately I had closed my eyes just before the fiery liquid had hit my face.

I was immediately taken to the first aid tent where they administered a cooling soothing salve and took me directly to the emergency room of the Dekalb County hospital where I was treated by the doctor on duty. The doctor put a patch over my eye and bandaged that side of my face and he said that by administering the salve and not trying to bandage it our first aid people had kept it from being damaged further. I had to wear the bandage for about a week but then I had to wear an eye patch for about two more weeks. This shows that a simple thing like cooking breakfast can really hurt you when you don't

expect it to.

On another occasion during the summer time, I was taking wooden crates apart in the back yard so I could break them up and stack them in the coal room to be used for kindling wood to start fires in the stove in the winter. I was running around barefoot and I stepped on this board which had a nail sticking up and it went into the bottom of my foot ,while I was hopping around trying to get the nailed board off the bottom of my foot I ran another nailed board into the bottom of my other foot. After getting the nails out I hobbled upstairs and mom doctored my feet by putting a salve on them and bandaging them both, unfortunately they both became infected and red streaks were going up my legs which the doctor said was some form of blood poisoning . He then lanced them putting a different kind of salve on them and giving mom some form of antibiotic pills for me to take, also I had to stay in bed with both feet elevated on pillows until the red streaks went away. After that I was more careful where I put my feet when I was barefoot..

## Chapter 5

I cannot remember ever having a girl friend with any of the girls I went to school with, for one thing I was very shy around girls another reason may have been because I was always in some form of trouble and of course my father was known by most of their parents as a person who drank too much was always into fighting and he intimidated school officials threatening them with physical violence sometimes. Being poor we never had the things that other children had and really had nothing to offer to girl friends. I don't feel that any of these things were anyone's fault it was just the way things were, also looking back I would have to say a lot of these problems were brought about by my attitude and my outlook on life at that time. Part of my problems developed when my father came home after drinking and unless he fell asleep at the kitchen table, he would remember us kids and usually come into our bedroom and whip us whether we had done anything wrong at that time or not. In our household there were no rewards if you did well or improved yourself, you never really knew if you were going to be whipped or not it all depended on my father's mood. Now I am not using this as an excuse for the things that I did, I'm sure that there were worse fathers out there than mine and when he was sober he was really a nice person. I loved my father very much even when he was hitting on me, only when he hurt my mother and the other children did I really want to hurt him back.

Our apartment was heated with a Morning Glory Stove which would burn wood or coal and in the winter when the stove was very hot we would toast our bread on the side of it,

In the summer I spent a lot of time in the coal room , as I mentioned previously it was located downstairs and I would sit down there in the quiet and read . That is where I learned to play the harmonica and a musical instrument called the sweet potato ,which was a type of flute that I have forgotten how to play . I used to sell Grit newspapers and that is how I got my first harmonica , I sent for a Herb Shriner harmonica and I received the harmonica, an identification card making me a member of his fan club and instructions on how to play the harmonica. Each of his harmonicas have his picture and his name embossed on it in red and blue and the harmonica itself is a chrome colored Hohner harmonica made in Germany. For those people who are unfamiliar with him, he was a very famous harmonica player and a good will ambassador for the Hoosier State. He appeared on television when it first started, he did personal appearances and played on the radio. Over the years I had accumulated quite a collection of harmonicas , including my fathers however later in life I came down with Chronic Bronchial Asthma and believing my harmonica playing days were over I sold a lot of them but I have been able to begin playing again. My father along with his harmonica also played a German accordion , this is with buttons instead of piano keys and my mother played a saxophone and the piano, it was my understanding that they used to play in beer joints and taverns. I never saw or heard them play together as children were not allowed in the places where they played. I would hear my mother play a piano whenever someone had one in their house where we were visiting. My father played the accordion at home now and then but one day he sold it to get drinking money and he never bought it back.

I would mention again that when my father was sober he really was a nice person but when he drank he was a very mean person, unfortunately he drank quite often. On one occasion he hit my mother so hard he broke her nose and damaged her face so badly that she was put in the hospital for a few days. During this time, as I was the oldest child I had to prepare the food for everyone and one night my father had been out drinking and his hamburger I had fixed for his supper had gotten cold, this made him angry and he hit me with his fist knocking my head against the wall so hard that I almost passed out.

One night in the summer when mom had came back from the hospital , he came home after a night of drinking and he fell asleep at the kitchen table with his chin on his hand. Two men who were walking by the front of the house downstairs were talking a little loudly and he woke up, he told my mom that they were talking about him and they had deliberately woke him up. He then jumped up from the table, ran down the stairs and beat these two guys up before they even knew what was happening and it turned out that they had no idea who he was or even why he had attacked them . A person never knew what kind of a mood he was in until it was to late.

Our small town of Garrett used to have street fairs in the summer with most of the rides that the larger fairs had like the ferris wheel, the octopus ,the merry go round; the plane ride, the caterpillar ride, had girlie shows, in fact I recall one incident where one of the men smoking caught one of the girls on fire. There were so many people complained about the fair being uptown that it was eventually moved out to the area just East of where the water treatment plant is today however eventually the fair was discontinued.

Altogether there were not enough people spending enough money to make it worthwhile for the fair people. At one time I worked at the stand where you'd throw the balls and knock down the milk bottles, the fair people hired kids because kids could sometimes make them more money because people related to the kids more than, then I think they do now. I remember when we used to put on costumes go trick or treating on Halloween and never have to worry or be concerned about people putting stuff in the candy to hurt the children and kids were allowed to trick or treat for longer periods of time.

I used to get in so much trouble in the summers that my parents arranged for me to spend my summers out to my Uncle's farm, their boy is around my age and we had grown up more or less together and we got along really well. They left me live there during the summer months treating me just like I was one of their children, they had three, two girls and a boy. There I learned to do farm work, like milk the cows [ they only had a couple ] feed the pigs and chickens, gather the eggs, Plow, disk, and plant different crops. It was a relatively small farm but contained most of the things you would find on a larger farm including two mules which we would occasionally ride bare back but they were really used for light work like pulling the cultivator and things like that leaving the tractors free for heavier work.

In the evenings while I was living on the farm we used to go to a town by the name of Corunna which had a bridge over the railroad for automobiles and beside this bridge was a small park like place where we would get to watch free movies. These would be full length movies shown on a portable screen with a 16 mm sound projector.

I never knew who arranged these movies but later I heard they were mostly for farm children who normally did not get to go to the regular movies ,and we got to go to them in Avilla and in a large area in Kendallville where they sold some form of farm tractor's . Most of these movies were westerns like Hopalong Cassidy , Roy Rogers, Gene Autry I believe they were considered a wholesome type movie more children oriented . They were shown in black and white mostly and we would carry blankets to lie on while watching the movies. Now sometimes I would find a girl to cuddle with but as these movies were in different places and the kids went with their parents usually you would not see the same girl again.

One day my cousin was driving a Model A Ford car and I was riding with him out in the field behind the barn, being a farm boy growing up on the farm he knew how to drive most vehicles, anyway that day we were spinning around in the field when the cars wheel caught in a rut and the car rolled over, we really caught the Devil that day , his father was very angry with him and I . I was talking with my cousin just the other day, we stay in touch and he said he remembered those as being good old days and I have to agree with him, they really are good memories, it was always hard to come back in town when the summer was over and have to go back to school. The children in town were not like the children who lived on the farms, the town children were always putting you down for the clothes that you wore and the things that you had ,where the farm kids didn't really care, their only concern was how you acted toward others and if you did your share of the things that had to be done.

Before I had learned how to swim we used to go to a small lake or maybe it was a gravel pit whichever , it was and still is located on the North side of highway 205 between Garrett and Laotto , it is now privately owned and has a no trespassing sign and a fence. One time back in the past when I was a kid I was wading around in the water and I accidentally stepped of into the deeper water as I didn't know how to swim at this time I was drowning and as I was going down for around the fourth and probably my last time this older teenager brought me to shore and saved my life. I never did find out what his name was as he left shortly after this incident , I later learned how to swim at the Garrett Swimming pool .

There came a time when I was fifteen Years old I was in school and we were having math when my teacher called me up to the blackboard to do a problem that she had put there and when I got up to the board I had no idea what the problem was, it was an algebra problem . I told the principal that I no longer wanted to go to school and he called my mother to the school and they had a conference and an agreement was reached and it was arranged that I could quit school even though I wasn't quite sixteen. I was allowed to go to work for the Garrett city street department. We were tearing down the old manholes and they were building new ones, then I worked at the city's power plant unloading railroad coal cars . After I turned 16 in October of 1951, I went to work at the Midwestern Foundry which was located on Quincy street in Garrett.

At the foundry I shifted weights, shoveled sand helped set up the pouring floors and ground burs off finished products. I worked there until October of 1952 at this time I talked my parents into signing for me to join the Marine Corps.

I went by bus to Indianapolis where we took a physical and were sworn into the Marine Corps , then we were put aboard a train which would take us to the Marine Corps base at San Diego , California. I and most of the other young men had never traveled any distance on a train before , we had sleeping compartments and coupons to eat in the dinning car where the food was unbelievably delicious. I had never ate a tuna fish steak before and couldn't believe it was the same fish they put in a can. Traveling through the mountains was a trip that I will remember always just as if it were yesterday. It was the first time I had ever seen any mountains live and not on some movie screen .

When we arrived in San Diego, we were taken to the base in military buses unloaded and lined up and verbally assaulted , we were told we were maggots and no longer human beings, then we were put into temporary quarters for that first night. As I had not been able to sleep good on that moving train I slept like a baby that night which the next morning became a problem because I slept right through the morning wake up call and two drill instructors woke me up by turning my bunk over on top of me. I was at this time given a name that followed me all the way through boot camp, I was called sleeping Jesus and this was how I became acquainted with my drill instructor Staff sergeant Wilson and my assistant drill instructor sergeant Kelly.

At this time I'm going to mention something which had happened during my childhood that I had not written about that had some bearing on my Marine Corps training and performance. One day when I was young and in grade school I was riding a bicycle going down a steep street and pedaling very fast when my right foot slipped off the pedal and it bounced off the ground striking the back fender so hard that it took a large chunk out of the calf of my leg as it was too large to stitch .The doctor had to put some sort of special bandage on it which would let it heal from the inside out and I wasn't supposed to be active on it in school sports or anything until it was healed. It was very difficult to walk up and down the stairs at home and one day coming downstairs I slipped and tore something loose in it, however after that I was able to walk fairly well but I always walked with a sort of a hick or bounce on that foot. Marching with this bounce really kept my drill instructor angry at me all of the time because it messed up how the others marched also.

One time I really messed up badly ,during the night when I went to the restroom there was no one around and I lit and smoked a cigarette ,somehow the drill instructor found out and we were only supposed to smoke when he told us we could, as punishment he had me light up two cigarettes , put a bucket upside down over my head and as I smoked those cigarettes I had to do stationary double time singing the Marine Corps hymn , after that I only smoked when the smoking lamp was lit.

At another time when we were on the parade ground having a rifle inspection as the instructor grabbed for my rifle I left go of it too early and it fell onto the cement, I had to sleep with it beside me in my bunk for two weeks. Somehow though we survived and there is no question in my mind that boot camp was hell on earth not only to me but to the others also. I even managed to graduate from boot camp and go on to advanced combat training at Camp Pendleton which was also in California. While we were going through training we also were taking more tests attempting to find out what we would be best suited for in the Military.

I ended up being sent to the Naval Air Technical Training Center in Jacksonville Florida where I went through an Airman preparation school to discover which phase of aviation I might be suited for. For example we spent one week in fire fighting where you actually went into and through a fire without being harmed , one week we worked with metal working tools and built this thing I believe was called a suez key , it was like a screwdriver type of thing used to take the panels off an aircraft to get to the hydraulic and electrical systems ,then one week we spent learning all about the reciprocating engine and we were taught how to start one , by sitting in the cockpit of an authentic world war two combat aircraft. We had to learn how to turn on the magneto switches , how to prime fuel into the engine or engines then adjust the fuel flow mixture so the aircraft would continue to run after it was started , that was a once in a lifetime experience.

It was determined from my scores and aptitude tests that I should become an aviation electrician and so I went on to Aviation Electricians School .

I completed this training and received my diploma or certificate of completion on the 9<sup>th</sup> of October 1953. At this time I had spent about a year in the Marine Corps and all of this time was spent in training.

Upon completion of my schooling I received orders to report to Cherry Point , North Carolina to VMR 153 which was a squadron of R4Q 2's. This was a twin engine cargo plane with the nickname [ flying boxcar ]. While I was stationed at Cherry Point I became acquainted with a man whom everyone called Bud and I met his wife and we became good friends. His wife's folks lived in a town by the name of Vanceboro, North Carolina, about 30 miles or so from Cherry Point and as they were going there for a visit they invited me to come along. At her folks home she introduced me to her sister who's name was Annette and I fell in love with her right there and then but at that time she was not interested in going with me. She thought I wore weird looking clothes and was not too keen on me being a Yankee but she did eventually go on a date with me.

One date led to another date and as we started to get more serious about each other I found out she was only fourteen years old and still going to school , I mentioned this to her brother-in-law Bud and he reminded me that I was only eighteen myself which was only four years older than her and hardly more than a kid myself.

She was a very inexpensive person to date ,we would go to the movies , have a soda popcorn and she would get a sour pickle , to the day she died she loved sour pickles. One night after seeing a movie while I was taking her home, I said , " You know if you were a little older I'd ask you to marry me." She said, "then ask me ." I did and she said yes.

## Chapter 6

I went to Korea on the troop ship U.S.N.S. Phoenix and as we crossed the 180<sup>th</sup> meridian I received the Golden Dragon certificate which I believe is the international dateline or something of that nature. To others this appeared to be a very important event but to me it was interesting and nothing more. Our ship stopped in the port of Yokosaki Japan and we were given what was called Cinderella liberty, what this was you were given liberty until twelve o'clock that evening at which time you had to be back aboard the ship . I went into the city and was very fascinated by the people and their different life style although I didn't get enough time to really look around before I had to be back aboard the ship.

Our ship then went on to Korea and when we disembarked we found they were experiencing very bad weather and we were temporarily housed in these four man tents with wooden floors and a kerosene stove for heat. It was so cold that some of us slept in our sleeping bags because the little stove really did not put out enough heat in that type of cold it was a wind chill factor of 50 or 60 below outside. The next morning I was awakened by the sun shining in my face , sometime during the night our stove had caught the tent on fire and it had burned completely down .

As they were in the middle of a storm at the time of the fire they thought they had everyone removed from the tent and replaced in other tents but somehow they missed me and I slept right through the entire thing. This was a very strange welcome to Korea. We really were fortunate that our belongings were in another area and not in that tent. I was taken by truck to the airbase where I would be stationed, it was known as King 3, when I arrived they were not sure of what to do with me since I had lost my aviation MOS. They decided to put me in on the job training in the field of air conditioning and since this was in the winter fixing ice machines and food freezers and coolers was what the job was all about.

After I had been there awhile, another marine and I were selected to be train guards. We guarded these Fuel drums, which were traveling by train to another military base and then we would come back to our base with a load of full fuel drums by train. We were given a boxcar to live in during the journey, given C-rations issued weapons, ammunition, the cars with the fuel drums were attached and our train started out. I think we made all of about 15 miles on the first day and then our train had to wait at a station until the train coming from the other direction arrived. From what I understood their system was set up in such a way that a train coming from one direction went in front of the station and a train coming from the other direction went behind the station, then a key would be given to the station master and he would give it to the engineer of the train whose train would then travel to the next station where the whole thing would be repeated.

This was their way of making sure the tracks were clear ahead, I don't know how they do it today but I would assume it is quite different. As you might suspect it took an unbelievable length of time for our train to get to it's destination which was about a hundred miles away it took us a couple of months to go that distance and back in the meanwhile a convoy of trucks made the trip there and back before our train even arrived there. At a later time , when I was doing guard duty back at King 3 ,as I mentioned before the winters were severely cold and as I was walking inside our fenced in perimeter as I was ending my patrol I noticed that it seemed to have gotten colder , after I was relieved and the new guard posted we discovered that sometime while I was walking my post that someone had evidently had tried to stab me in the back because my coat had been slashed almost completely through and that is why I was getting cold, I believe I really had someone watching over me that night .

Summer in Korea was also a difficult time as they have a type of climate where it can rain sometimes for days at a time without let up. In our country when you go by a farmers field and you smell animal fertilizer it is nothing compared to Korea , where their principal crop is rice and their rice paddies are fertilized with both human and animal waste. So you have this smell throughout the entire country all through the summer and I never really got used to it, just going from day to day was very difficult .

I recall one time moving some of our men from one location to another and I was volunteered to drive one of the trucks.

The truck that I was driving had a hydramatic transmission however the truck ahead of mine had a clutch and a manual transmission and as we were starting to go down off the top of this mountain road , the driver ahead of me must not have been familiar with how to shift gears on a mountain grade and we heard him racing the engine and the gears grinding as he tried to put the truck in gear , we could hear him as he went around the turn ahead of us still trying to get the truck in gear. It is very difficult to put a truck in gear after you are already picking up speed going downhill, and if you wait too long before putting on your brakes then you will be traveling to fast for them to stop you and they will start to get hot super fast and not be able to slow you down anymore. The officer that was traveling in my truck and I didn't believe they were going to make it to the bottom of the mountain without crashing , but somehow they did . We came across them parked at the side of the road at the bottom of the grade and as we pulled beside them we could hear the Marines in the back shouting out wild trip, fantastic ride, far out. I doubt if they really were aware how dangerous that ride really was. The officer in our truck asked the officer in the other truck if he wanted to get out and stretch his legs and he said he couldn't because he had wet himself coming down that mountain, their truck had to be towed , because the transmission was totally trashed and the brakes were burned up.

The American government leased the land from the Korean people that our bases were on.

If there was an area of land on the base that the Koreans could grow some form of grain on then a farmer could come unto the base and under supervision ,plant and harvest that grain now as most us these farmers were relatively poor , they used a thing which was called an a frame to carry stuff around on. This was a thing made of wood that they fastened to their back and mostly used their legs to carry stuff with ,they could carry some very heavy loads this way . I am mentioning this because one day when I was visiting a friend of mine who was doing military police duty minding one of the gates on our base this Korean farmer was leaving the base with this a frame which had wheat piled on it at least 5 or 6 feet high. My friend checked him at the gate and as the Korean walked down the road he stopped and set the a frame down for a moment, however when he went to pick it up some of the wheat fell off to reveal a jeep motor which he had stolen from the base . He was arrested and taken away by the Korean police , if he had not had to sit it down we would never had known he even had it.

We had gun emplacements all around our base, some of the larger caliber weapons were electrically powered and they had their own back up gas powered generators. One day we had a simulated enemy attack to test our defenses , the only weapons that worked were those that could be aimed and turned by hand . It seems the batteries, motors and generators that powered the other weapons had been stolen and we think it might have been by the friendly Koreans as these items on the black market gave them more money than they could get anywhere else .

The Koreans were allowed to come unto our base with their trucks and collect the stuff thrown away by our mess halls, as there was quite a large amount of stuff discarded on a daily basis from all our mess halls they usually came each day. Our mess halls had meals constantly being served for the people who worked nights as well as days. I mention this because one day I was put on guard detail to travel with one of these trucks. My job was to see that the only stuff that left the base were the things we wanted them to have. At first I didn't understand why there were so many people with each truck . I found out that these trucks were trucks left behind by the Japanese when they had occupied Korea during the second world war. These trucks could travel on a level highway or coast down a hill however everyone had to get off and push going uphill. The truck I was traveling with quit running and when they opened the hood to repair it, I saw that they had used coat hangers in place of their wires that went from the coil to the distributor and for their spark plug wires . They refastened one of the wires , the driver let out the clutch and everybody got off and pushed and we were once again on our way. In our country these trucks would be considered as collectible in their country they were a necessity.

My time was finally up and I was being flown to Yokohama to catch a troop ship back to the U.S. As we were flying to Japan, I noticed we had an escort of propeller driven fighter planes. I asked the crew chief about this and he said that the aircraft that we were traveling in was so far overdue on engine maintenance that if we went down they would radio our location, was he joking with me ? I never knew .

Oh, there was one more thing, one day as I was sitting in a Korean village near our base playing songs on my harmonica, I was just relaxing and leaning back with my eyes closed playing Auld Lang Syn when I opened my eyes it looked like the entire village was gathered around me , I asked my interpreter what was happening these people had heard me play the harmonica before and had never paid any attention to it before ,he said that this song was the Korean national anthem, to this day I don't know whether he was telling me the truth or not, sometimes our interpreters had weird a weird sense of humor and were pulling our legs so to speak.

When I went aboard the ship that was bringing us home I was seasick as soon as I stepped aboard as I had had this problem when I had boarded the other ship I went and talked with the ship's doctor . He said that it appeared that I had an inner ear problem and just the vibration of the ships engines might be causing me problems. At least now I might have some idea of why small boats don't seem to bother me ,they don't have that vibration.

After arriving in the U.S. , we were temporarily stationed at Treasure island and my wife traveled all the way from Vanceboro , North Carolina to be with me in California. We shared a small apartment with the wife of a friend of mine who was stationed in Korea with me, he was coming stateside later. His wife owned a 1948 Dodge automobile, however she really did not like to drive, so I usually drove .

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One evening we were at an intersection waiting for the light to change to green, a brand new 1955 Chevrolet with no more than 35 miles on the speedometer came around the curve behind us and struck our car so hard that even with the brakes locked we were pushed clear through the intersection. The front end of the new Chevrolet was totally destroyed but it had only knocked out the red tail light lens in the center of the trunk on the Dodge and dinged up the bumper a little with no other damage. The driver of the Chevrolet was arrested by the police because he was too drunk to pass the sobriety test. He could almost make you drunk just by breathing in your direction. I received a ticket from the police officer because I was driving on my military license and did not have a California license. The very next day I went to the BMV and passed the driving and written test and got a California license. When I appeared in the traffic court I explained to the judge that I had only recently arrived from Korea and that I was not aware that my military license would not allow me to drive civilian cars.

The judge was very reasonable about it and he conferred with the arresting officer who had given me the ticket and I ended up paying a fairly small fine and they allowed me to keep my newly acquired California license. The real reason I mention this incident was because so much damage was done to the Chevrolet that it had to be towed from the scene and there was so little damage to the Dodge.

## Chapter 7

My wife and I then traveled to my home in Indiana and she stayed with my folks while I went to the Crane Naval Depot in Crane Indiana to get as service men call it, [ mustered out of the service ], or as civilians know it receiving my discharge from the service. At Crane I received an Honorable Discharge and was placed on an inactive reserve status. I then returned to my home and wife and tried to return to work at the Midwest Foundry as if there had never been an interruption in my life , however everything had changed both in my life and in the Foundry . I was put to work in the core department and also grinding castings, it wasn't long after this, that the Foundry discontinued use of this facility and the site later became a rubber company, which also was discontinued , Sometime in the future the city will do something with this area.

Coming back from Korea was very strange to me, I felt more like Korea was real and this country was not, that the buildings appeared different, the people appeared different and acted different, where in reality it was probably I who was different and not really aware of it. Part of it was like being in Korea the regard for human life by us was different than my regard for human life in the United States, it seemed their lives were much harder, they died younger, or appeared to, they had things more primitive like ox carts, A frames, even the way they grew their rice. The feeling that I felt in the U.S. was like I was a stranger in a strange land surrounded by people who also in some way appeared to be strange. It may be that going to an oriental country as a young soldier and staying there for some type of extended time created some form of cultural shock for me.

In order to give the reader some idea of my frame of mind at this time, I had a wonderful wife even though she was very young who was trying to help me through these problems even though she or I were not aware of what they were. We owned a 1946 black Ford car with a flathead v-eight engine , at this time my wife and I were temporarily living with my parents out West of Avilla in Indiana which we called the black ranch because it had black siding material on the house. One night I had been in town drinking a couple of beers and as I was on my way home I decided that life sucked and I pressed the accelerator all the way to the floor and when the car was going as fast as I thought it would go , I spun the steering wheel to the left, as I was on a gravel road I was in and out of the ditch on both sides of the road . The car rolled end over end and side over side somehow ending up sitting on it's wheels in the ditch all smashed up. I was not drunk when I did this, I had been drinking but at the time I knew what I was doing and my wife knew this . She told me she could not stay with me and watch me kill myself without even knowing why , she felt I was too messed up mentally and went back to her home in North Carolina . My biggest injury from this action was caused by a tow chain which originally had been lying on the floor in the back of the car but ended up wrapped around my neck. The damage to the car was so severe that we dragged it home with a farm tractor and you could take hold of the front of the grill of the car and lift the body off the frame, everything was torn apart. The spare tire had been in the trunk had somehow went through the rear window and was found a couple of weeks later almost a mile from where the wreck occurred.

Looking back on this time in my life, I feel that I really needed some form of psychiatric help at this time but I was not aware that I could have received help from the VA programs and if I had been aware of these programs I don't know if I would have even accepted this help if it had been offered at this time. No one had ever mentioned and I had never thought about military benefits or any type of treatment at any VA hospital . I did like most people today are still doing, I just muddled on through life as best as I could . After somehow managing this phase of my life , I once again got my feet somewhat on the ground and got back in touch with Annette and we decided to give it another try as we had never divorced all we had to do was get back together. She came back and I got a job at Universal Tool and Stamping Co. in Butler Indiana. There I operated stamp presses, metal shears, metal brakes and also drove fork lift, this Company manufactures automobile jacks. My wife and I rented a three room apartment in what was then the Butler hotel and I worked the night shift at Universal Tool.

One time on a weekend my wife and I were going with a friend into Ohio to a night spot where they had dancing and country music. As we were traveling on the highway to get there it kept getting foggier and we started having trouble seeing the road, in fact my wife and I had just mentioned to our friend driving that we thought he might be driving too fast for the road conditions. At this time we ran out of road, the highway had turned and we hadn't , we drove off the road and wrecked the car rolling it over on it's top.

Annette was injured and I didn't know how badly, the windshield was smashed down to the steering column and so I kicked out the back window and pulled her out that way , our friend and I were not injured. We saw the lights of a farm house nearby and I carried Annette there, she could have walked as her legs were not injured but I really didn't know this at that time and my adrenaline was keeping both of us going . An ambulance arrived and it was determined that she probably had a fractured wrist, on the way into the hospital she had them run the siren as she was afraid someone might hit us in the fog. Her wrist was broken and the next day it was put in a cast. A few days after the accident I was rudely awakened in the middle of the night by this terrible blow to my throat while I was sleeping , as I fell out of bed I woke up Annette. What happened was she had rolled over in her sleep striking me across the throat with her cast it darn near killed me , my throat was sore for a couple of days.

Around 1956 my parents moved into a small two story house on a county road west of Butler Indiana, I believe it was Route 2 although I'm not sure. They rented this house from people who would go out of their way to help you . I called these people and asked if I could use their names in my book and they said it would be alright, and they are Bob and Evelyn Ridge they still live on their farm there today , however Bob I believe entered into city politics , I think on the city council and Evelyn still works at the B.M.V. in Butler . These people helped my parents many times , my mom told me they were forever giving her vegetables and food when she needed it.

I purchased a 1936 Harley Davidson motorcycle and one day I put an inner tube from my father's car on the handle bars and took it into town to one of the service stations and had it repaired on the way back to the house , the main gas tank on my motorcycle ran out of gas so I reached down and switched over to my auxiliary tank. Something went wrong, The gas tanks burst into flames when the engine backfired and I laid the motorcycle down on it's side on the highway , it was sliding and burning, the inner tube also was burning . There was a semi tractor trailer truck coming toward me on the highway , he came to a stop and as I ran up to him he was holding his fire extinguisher out to me . Without slowing down I took the extinguisher back to my blazing motorcycle but it had no effect on the fire. At this time a telephone repair truck stopped and this man took this extinguisher on wheels out of the back of this truck , and as he pumped it this powder came out engulfed the flames and put them out unfortunately the motorcycle was ruined. I might mention at this time that this was the third time this motorcycle had caught on fire, the first time was a ruptured gas line , the second time some type of electrical problem . I felt that three times meant that I should feel that I was being told something. So I junked the motorcycle.

## Chapter 8

Around this time a friend of my wife and I mentioned that his girlfriend and he might know of a way we could get rich or at least make a lot of money. This operation was not very legal . So we gathered up copies of payroll checks and the signatures of authorized representatives of different companies through his girlfriend from companies in Michigan and Ohio. My friend and I would make up company payroll checks and my wife and this other girl would cash them. We did not make the checks out for large amounts and they were very easy to cash however we made out a lot of them. As the representatives were real people with real companies, sometimes we would alter lobby bank checks from different banks and make them into our companies checks.

There was a time as we were starting to pass these bad checks where we were almost caught [we found this out later ], in Angola Indiana. We were renting this motel room and we saw what appeared to be two people watching the motel where we were staying. As we were very nervous and afraid of being caught not wanting to take any unnecessary chances we slipped out of the back window. We left stuff that we had just purchased on the beds and left stuff in the refrigerator where it looked like we were coming right back. We found out after we were caught that the authorities had put that motel under surveillance but they were not sure at that time just who they were looking for and didn't know we were the right ones.

After they were sure we were the ones they wanted and they had went into the motel, they discovered the stuff we had left there and thinking we had went out to cash more checks they were hoping that we would return. I understand that they kept it under observation for about a week at which time they discovered we had been cashing more checks and were a long way from there. The F.B.I. became involved when it was discovered we were traveling from state to state cashing checks from one state in another state.

We needed a better car and so we purchased a Chevrolet station wagon which turned out to be a very good buy. This vehicle gave us very little trouble all the time we owned it. We traveled from Indiana, to Michigan and then on to Florida where we arrived at a time that the banks were closed and the stores couldn't verify the checks that were being cashed. By the time we had arrived in Florida we had cashed quite a few checks and we were aware by this time that we would never be able to contact our parents again without being captured . I think realizing all of this what happened next was really more or less expected , my wife tried to cash two checks in the same store because the second store she entered was really a part of the store she had already cashed a check in, and she was followed to the car where license numbers were taken and the police notified along with a description of the car. This occurred in a town by the name of Hollywood Florida and as we pulled into this service station we saw a police car on each corner of the intersection . My friend said," I'll see you later." and he disappeared inside the service station, this in 1958 and I have never seen him since.

The two girls and I were arrested at this time for vagrancy , even though we had money. We were not considered to be tourists and we did not have a job in Florida so they considered us to be vagrants. I believe this was merely a way to hold us until a warrant could be issued. The warrant came from Broward county and we were put in the Broward county jail. There is no question that we also might have made an attempt at getting away, but my wife, the other girl and I decided not to. We would have been running from the police the rest of our lives, leaving our parents behind without any contact ever and I know my wife could not have done that, so we decided to face the consequences. We waived extradition and allowed them to come get us from Ohio.

The sheriff and his wife arrived from Fulton county Ohio to take the three of us back to stand trial for the bad checks that were cashed there.

During the day when we were traveling in the sheriff's car, I had on leg shackles, then a chain fastened to them that was attached to my handcuffs which were in front of me, this allowed me limited use of my hands, like if we were eating at a restaurant . My wife was handcuffed if I remember only when we were out of the vehicle because they really weren't concerned about her trying to get away but there were certain regulations they had to abide by when transporting prisoners from state to state. At night we were housed in different jails in different counties in different states as we came back from Florida to Ohio. At this time neither one of us would have thought about escaping, we just wanted it to be over where we could start our lives again. The other person who had been with us was captured at a later time, when he had returned home.

He was put into the Ohio State Prison for violation of his parole and I never had any contact with him to this day. We made restitution for all of the checks we had cashed including the ones we were being tried for and we had my parents sell all of our possessions to make full restitution to everyone.

We were eventually charged with two counts of forgery, fraud and counterfeiting as all of the other charges were dropped because we had made restitution. We pleaded guilty to these charges and I told the judge that my wife was not a willing partner in this crime, He said that this would not be necessary as he had already made a decision to give her probation and turned over into the care of her parents. At this time in our lives we had only been married four years and she was only eighteen years old, normally she would be just graduating out of high school and I had messed up her life so badly. The judge asked me if I had anything to say before he passed sentence on me, my attorney advised me to say no , and I said no. Then the judge said, " In view of the fact that you have an honorable discharge from the military and there is no record of your ever being in jail before this time, this court has decided to be lenient with you, therefore we are not going to send you to the State prison but instead we are sending you to the Ohio state reformatory at Mansfield Ohio for not less than one year nor more than twenty years, this sentence to begin immediately.

My wife's mother and father had already sent her the money to get home on the bus and my mother took her to the bus station.

Annette told me she would wait for me no matter how long it took. So I went to the Ohio state reformatory, my prison number was 58020. I was almost in trouble my very first day there, us new people were put in a receiving area for the first few days about like boot camp to me. At that time I smoked cigarettes and there was this person who had violated his parole and been returned to prison, who came up to me and told me he wanted some new boy to share his cell with and that he liked me. I was smoking a cigarette at the time and he was only wearing under ware and I reached down pulled out the front of his shorts and threw my cigarette in there, it took him a short time to realize what had happened until it started burning him, then he was jumping around and hollering which made one of the guards come over, and ask what the problem was and he told the guard he had accidentally dropped his cigarette in his shorts.

I never had that type of problem all of the rest of the time I was there, however there was a problem getting someone to share a cell with me because the word went around that I was a mental case and did strange things. Eventually they did locate someone to be my cell mate and I settled into prison life as well as I could. I tried to stay out of trouble as much as possible . Eventually I became a trustee working in the plumbing department and the electrical department , both inside and outside the prison walls, with a guard of course. One day one of the catholic inmates was telling me that they made him go to church whether he wanted to or not and I said , " If the Pope knows about this and doesn't stop it, then his religion isn't worth a darn.

I was overheard saying this by one of the guards , saying things about religion in prison can cause serious problems even start riots and I was taken to an area called the hold. This was a row of cells built above the boilers, which produced the heat and electricity for the entire institution. You had a toilet in each room and a lavatory to wash your hands, you did not have a bed you sleep on the floor and you wear a one piece suit, you don't get much sleep anyway because each of the steel doors has this window with a door on it and every so often this guard comes along to make sure you are alright. He opens and slams each little door to each cell that is occupied and sometimes I thought he did it to cells that were not occupied to make sure we did not get any sleep. In there there was no way of knowing if it was day or night or how long you had been in there.

In the prison system they had what was called small court and big court, small court handled small cases, like talking when you were not supposed to or smoking where and when you were not allowed to. The court that I went to was the one called big court, where they had to make a decision as to what I had said could have been serious enough to have started a riot, fortunately for me, they decided that was not my intention and I was not punished any further . This did make me realize that from then on I needed to have my brain engaged before I opened my mouth. Eventually as time went by I was transferred out to the honor dormitory, which was located outside the prison walls .

My wife during this time was working and she would bring the bus up and visit me when she could afford it.

During my time in there , even though I was involved in many things I still had a lot of time on my hands and I used this time to write poetry . I believe it shows how my attitude and personality were changing and maturing and so the next section of my story will be the poetry that I have written , if the reader does not care for poetry they may skip past this section and start to read after the poetry .

The very first poem that I wrote was to my wife , and she encouraged me to write more. As this will be the first time these poems have been printed since I wrote them , they will all be dated with today's date.

WE ARE TOGETHER

by

George J. Peters

November 18,1998

One to twenty said the judge , and one to twenty I will do.

But I'll only serve the days sweetheart, the nights I'll spend with you.

I'll dream of days gone by, of heaven and of bliss,

Romantic hours of you my love, a whisper or a kiss.

Of days full of love my sweet, of moonlit nights in June.

Drive in movies in summer months beneath the harvest moon.

There isn't a night goes by, that I don't think of you,

Of the happiness that waits for us and all the things we'll do.

So serve my time I will do until they switch off the light.

And then in dreams I'll come to you and stay throughout the night.

THE HABIT  
by  
George J. Peters  
November 18, 1998

I grab a cigarette off the table with a shaky hand.  
I inhale great clouds of smoke, the flavor is so grand.  
But now I ponder for awhile, and I wonder about this weed,  
It must be a habit that has hold of me, for it fills no earthly need.  
I say I'll quit for awhile, But this is all a lie,  
For when my fingers start to shake, I'll light one with a sigh.  
I say to myself, that's alright, tomorrow this weed I'll quit.  
It's always fun to make believe, but I'll end up smoking it.  
So I guess I'll quit lying to myself and admit the way things stand,  
Although I curse and fret and rave, that nicotine has the upper hand.

The above poem was written because I was at one time a very heavy smoker but I was able to quit smoking , the secret to being able to quit that I discovered is that you need to want to quit for yourself because if you are quitting for someone else or because of someone else it is too easy too backslide back into smoking. But if you really want to quit you can , my wife quit smoking and she did not want to quit but she was told if she continued smoking she would die sooner than if she quit smoking and she quit.

I like to think my poetry improved as I continued to write, although sometimes I'm not really sure, the next poem I wrote was how I felt about my wife.

Goddess  
by  
George J. Peters  
November 18, 1998

Oh, you are so beautiful, so very fair, I think the Angels sprinkled Stardust In Your Hair.

Only an Angel could have such a beautiful face, I'll bet millions of boys have given you chase.

Your voice is like a thousand bells tinkling out loud, my mind gets real fuzzy my head's in a cloud.

Your eyes sparkle like diamonds under a soft blue light, you float through my dreams, when I'm sleeping at night.

Your lips are like wine, soft but yet bright, when I kiss you my darling my head feels so light.

When your lips touch mine with just a light brush, my heart starts to pound, my blood starts to rush.

My mind quits working and I know no fear, I could tear up the world when you are near.

You're as beautiful as Venus as soft as the dew, no man can think straight when he sees you.

And to think you are mine and mine all alone, I'll cherish you forever, I'll build you a home.

Maybe we'll be together, maybe we will not be apart, wherever you go dear you have with you my heart.

I'll never meet another girl as lovely as you, your eyes are like raindrops, so soft and so blue.

Your skin so soft and tender mere words can't express, how I feel when you touch my face with a tender caress.

I'll lay my heart darling at the ground by your feet, pick it up put it near yours and let the two of them meet.

TOMORROW  
by  
George J. Peters  
November 18, 1998

Tomorrow maybe the sun will shine, tomorrow maybe again you'll be mine.  
But will tomorrow ever come? Or with this day is my life done?  
Tomorrow when Summer's gone, tomorrow when winter hums her song.  
Tomorrow is all that I can say, but will tomorrow come my way?  
Tomorrow when my dreams come true and when it comes will I see you.  
Why tomorrow? Why not today? Why is tomorrow all we can say?  
Tomorrow shouldn't be special in any way, tomorrow will be just like today.  
When tomorrow comes I'll still be blue, for it only brought me one day closer to you.

MY LOVE  
by  
George J. Peters  
November 18, 1998

She is my Angel from above, she is my hold on life.  
There is no doubt she is my love, the girl who is my wife.  
The stars sparkle in her eyes, her eyes so soft and blue.  
My heart melts when she softly sighs and says darling I love You.  
When I hold her near to me, I burn with a new fire.  
For she is all I can see, she's my love and my desire.  
To hear her voice soft and clear and have her by my side,  
Takes away my cares and fears and opens my heart wide

ELECTRICITY  
by  
George J. Peters  
November 18, 1998

What is electricity ? What can it do ?

It can bring music, movies and television to you.

Without electricity where would we be ?

Using kerosene lamps makes it difficult to see.

Yes electricity is important in our world of today,

leading us toward the future, paving the way.

If Benjamin Franklin Hadn't used his kite,

we'd still be in darkness throughout the night.

We produce electricity by water flowing over a dam,

millions of volts harnessed and controlled by man.

There's electricity in our cars, boats and planes.

It's also in our buses, our schools and our trains.

Almost everything in this world of today,

Is connected with electricity in some form or some way.

Electricity isn't expensive, it doesn't have much of a cost.

But if it were stopped everyone would be lost.

So stop and think before you go to work today,

Of just how much you get, for what little you pay.

MY VISION  
by  
George J. Peters  
November 18, 1998

I saw cities of diamonds, I saw mountains of gold.

All beautiful things, that could never be sold.

I saw hundreds of girls, so young and so fair,

With me all alone, I was the only man there..

I could fly in the air, yes float through the sky.

I could touch the stars as they slowly came by.

I could see millions of flowers, caressed with a breeze.

I saw distant forests with gigantic trees.

I saw the dazzling light from the sun up above,

I could see no evil only visions of love.

You ask where can I find this ? Where can it be ?

How can there be a place where everything's free ?

But there is such a place, and it's on everyone's mind.

It's the world that we want, that we're trying to find.

Yes, I've seen all of these things, even though they were in a dream,

And maybe someday this world too can be that pure and clean.

The next poem was written on a weekend sitting outside watching the cars going by outside our honor dormitory .

WHY HURRY  
by  
George J. Peters  
November 18, 1998  
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I've stood on a corner and watched the people go by,  
All hurrying somewhere with no thoughts of why.  
Pushing and pawing and fighting along,  
No thoughts of poetry, no thoughts of song,  
And traffic being held up five blocks at a time,  
All blowing their horns like the people were blind.  
I've seen planes flying high above the ground,  
While everyone below is scurrying around.  
Why are they hurrying? What can they possibly find?  
The last one gets the same as the first one in line.  
It's best to go slow where you'll see everything.  
The gold of the wheat, the flowers in the spring.  
Even in the winter when there's snow on the ground,  
Don't hurry so much, take time to look around.  
This world hurries to much and no one can see,  
What God has placed here for you and for me.

I was inspired by the next poem when summer arrived, all the things I had taken for granted had become precious to me. I call it simply

SUMMERTIME  
by  
George J. Peters  
November 18, 1998

Well finally summer is in the air, with little children playing everywhere.  
The birds sing out their songs of love, and the stars shine brighter from above.  
The blooms of flowers come into view, for this is summer when everything is new.  
The weather's fair and warm and fine and drifting in it is the scent of pine.  
Squirrels, chipmunks and the little things, through out the woods their chatter rings.  
Summer has come to this part of earth, when animals to their young give birth.  
The time, when all things start to live the time, to be happy, the time to give.  
The wind slightly stirs the tops of the trees, a light wind, a soft wind, a gentle breeze.  
The time, for things that should be done, the toil, beneath a bright warm sun.  
A field of wheat reaching, toward the sky, the prayers for rain when the land is dry.  
The noise of insects filling the night, The feeling that everything is alright .  
The time to fish, swim and play, the time, to be happy and carefree and gay.  
The time to make your dreams come true, to plan, to work, to see things through.  
To feel soft grass beneath bare toes, to see the petals open on a soft red rose.  
Ah , yes, summer when the nights are nice and cool, when work is just a plaything and  
life your precious tool.

I wrote a lot of poetry for my wife , there really was nothing else that I had at that time that I could give her except my poetry and my love.

MY ANGEL  
by  
George J. Peters  
November 18, 1998

My sweetheart's an Angel, wherever she may be, my sweetheart's an Angel, she came to earth for me.

She had to live in heaven, before she came my way. I know that she's an Angel, it doesn't matter what you say.

When she was up in heaven, God looked down to see, Who could use an Angel, then he discovered me.

Then I had no sweetheart, I was really feeling blue, So he sent me down an Angel, to be my darling true.

Well then she came to earth and met me one fine day. I know that God had sent her, to help me find the way,

For when she was in heaven, he saw I was, all alone, He sent her down to love me and be my very own.

Her eyes are like diamonds, sparkling in the night , And when I'm with my Angel, then everything's alright.

Her hair is sprinkled with stardust, from heaven up above, Her lips are red as rosebuds and she's the one I love.

Now I know that she's an Angel, she was sent from up above, and now she is my Angel, forever for me to love.

She knows how much I love her, she knows how much I care, I know when I get home, she will be waiting there.

## WHY I DON'T WANT FAME

by

George J. Peters

November 18, 1998

Oh, what pains we have to suffer living upon this earth, tell me if you can kind sir just what is my life worth.

Should I be afraid of death? I don't know why I should, for death shall claim us all one day, the bad along with the good.

Our life is like a chess game, played on a mighty board, and in our graveyards are where the losers are stored.

So why fight to be a power? Why strive to be a king? Just take what life offers you don't beg for anything.

Now it could be that I'm wrong, about these things I say. But the earth is just a stage on which we do our play.

Yes, some of us are bright and some of us are dumb, and some of us are good ,while some of us are scum.

You know we can't all be good, nor can we all be bad, and those who do obtain wealth, often end up sad.

For whenever you do gain fame, you might lose something dear, and no matter how rich you get, even rich men have their fear.

For money can buy you mansions and money can buy you fame, but no matter how much money you have, you're human just the same.

You see the poor man loses nothing, for he has nothing to lose, if I could sit and choose my life, perhaps the poor one I would choose.

You see if I were a king, how unhappy I would be, for I could never be myself, and never really free.

You see every time I looked around, at my land so fine, in my heart, I would know, it isn't really mine.

But if I were a farmer with just a little ground, then I would be happy every time I looked around,,

Because there would be no doubt, that all the land that I could see, with rocks , hills and forests would belong to only me.

So to me kind sir, won't you please explain, the reason why you're so set on wealth and fame,

And if you're not, well then pray tell, just build a house and dig a well, and what you have will be your own, maybe nothing fancy but it will be home.

I also wrote the words to three different songs, which were sent to three different music companies and at one a record was made, it wasn't recorded right and it sounds like it's dragging when it plays , I still have the song sheets on it and the name of it was Dreams are made to be broken. I have written two other poems within the past three weeks , I am going to put them in now instead of waiting

BESIDE MY LADY  
by  
George J. Peters  
November 18, 1998

Well bury me beside my lady, bury me beside my Annette dear.  
And when you come where we are sleeping, we will feel your presence here.  
The days are long, the nights are weary, I know my time is running low.  
And someday soon the call will come dear, and that's when I too will go.  
So bury me beside my lady, bury me beside my Annette dear.  
And when you come where we are sleeping, if you speak, your words we'll hear.  
I have lived my lifetime through, yes, for each and every day.  
Knowing someday soon the end would come, when I too would lie beneath the clay.  
Yes, bury me beside my lady, bury me beside my Annette dear,  
And when you come where we are sleeping, we will know you're very near.  
I don't want no flowers growing above me, no other stone above my head.  
Just think of us as if we're sleeping, and not as if we're dead.  
Prison to most people it's just a name, they can't share the torment or feel the pain.  
My prison what is it like? It's dying a thousand deaths all in one night.

THE REAL PRISON  
by  
George J. Peters  
November 18, 1998

The real prison is not the prison that people think they know,  
It's not just a large wall behind which criminals go.

The real prison is the emotions that are hidden in our mind,  
It's the hope that's built up which we never really find.

It contains loneliness and despair that try to tear you apart,  
It's not something you see but it's there in your heart.  
And there's a fear inside you building up more everyday,  
The fear of uncertainty, that you have already lost your way..

This prison is a life without meaning, with seemingly no end,  
And you grasp and you cling to those who try to be your friend.  
The world appears to be darkness, coldness, living in doubt.  
No light ,at the end, to help you work your way out.

Your mind keeps remembering with each passing day,  
That your live and your love is gone, she just passed away.  
And you are locked in your mind, night after night.  
The darkness crushing you and no way you can fight.

The real prison, what is it like? It's not a jail cell night after night.  
It's not what you can see it's what you can feel, that makes this prison so very real.  
Prison to most people is where you go when you're bad,  
My prison is in my mind where I always feel sad

I also wrote the words to three different songs, which were sent to, three different, Music companies and at one a record was made. I still have it but when they recorded it some how they did it in such a way that at one place in the sound track it drags and it doesn't sound right. I do have the words to this song on some song sheets which came with the record , the title of the song is " Dreams are made to be Broken ".

Altogether I served a year and ten days in the Ohio, state reformatory . I was paroled into the custody of my wife's father and a North Carolina parole officer Annette's mother and father had to of loved their daughter beyond the normal relationship to put up with a person like me after I had created all of these problems for them. In all of the time that I knew him, Annette's father never complained about her marrying me, however he did at times refer to me as that damn yankee. When I was paroled from prison my wife was working at the Craven Log & Veneer company in New Haven , North Carolina , where she had a job waiting for me also. This company manufactured turkey crates starting with the log and ending with the finished product. I was paroled in January 1959 and worked there until July 1959 at which time I got a job at New Bern Provision company however I didn't work directly for the company itself, I worked for their livestock purchasing company which was under the name of Craven Hog Market, here I purchased hogs and cattle. I drove livestock trucks, semi-tractors ,, however I sometimes drove trucks for New Bern provision company for an example we had a real bad hurricane hit that year and I helped drive emergency food supplies up to Morehead city which had been without food since the hurricane hit.

Usually though I transported livestock from auctions and farms where Craven Hog Market had purchased them for the New Bern Provision company , I also assisted in the operation of purchasing and weighing livestock at our livestock receiving yard located at the provision company. We sometimes purchased an over supply of animals , more than the provision company could handle. When this occurred and the livestock were hogs the company would have them transported to the Oscar Meyer plant in Virginia where they would become sausages, hams and what ever meat products were made out of pigs. Their plant was located in Smithfield and we would drive from dusk until dawn making the trip there unloading and returning. On one of these trips we had a very frightening experience. Our semi's could not run fast like the tractor's of today, and we drafted off each other to get up speed , however when we were traveling in the mountains back then the highways were mostly single lane in each direction and in order to pass at night when going up or down the mountain, when we wanted to pass another semi we would turn our lights off and the truck we were passing would turn their lights off then when we had cleared their truck then they would turn their lights back on , we would also turn our lights back on as we were pulling in front of them. This worked only when you could see the road with your lights off of course. One night , when I was driving on our way to Smithfield we got behind a slower truck so we turned out our lights and he did the same and just as we pulled in front of him and turned on our lights, these two trucks coming down the mountain also turned on their lights.

If either of the passing vehicles had been slower we would have had a four semi-truck wreck on the side of that mountain which would have been a major disaster. I might explain one of the reasons we would do this was so you could see the lights of the oncoming vehicle flickering as it came around the curves before you could see it . I might mention I never did this again.

In September 1960 the State of North Carolina passed some type of law that if you operated weigh scales where you were engaged in purchasing items depending on their weight and buying from the public, you had to have a high school education or a GED. As I had neither one of these my job terminated at that time.

My wife had wanted to have a baby ever since we had married but she never did get pregnant , so we went to a doctor to find out why. It was determined by the doctor that Annette was not relaxing and by being tense she could not get pregnant . He prescribed some kind of tablets which she took and on May 28<sup>th</sup> 1960 in the city of New Bern, North Carolina our first child was born . We named him Milton Gene, Milton after Annette's cousin's husband and Gene after Annette's youngest brother ,at this time we had been married around six years. About this time I went to work at English Construction company in Virginia. We knew this married couple that lived outside of Vanceboro North Carolina, and her husband worked there and he told us they were looking for workers , I went there with him when he went to work and I was hired. This company was engaged in constructing bridges on the new interstate highway being built in Virginia.

Him and I rented a motel room in Virginia and stayed there during the work week , then when we were off for the weekend we would drive home spend the week ends with our wives then drive back for the next week's work. At this time Annette and I lived in a small house that were owned by the parents of the person that I was riding back and forth with . In May\_of 1961 we had our second child , we named her Althea Ann, there was a poem written by Richard Lovelace entitled to Althea from prison, this was what inspired us to name her Althea, then at a later time my wife nick named her Mrs. Patootsie which at a later time became simply Tootie , which is what I still call her today even though she's thirty some years old.

A very strange thing occurred on a Friday in February 1962. It was snowing that evening and accumulated at least a foot of snow when sometime after 10 PM there was a knock on our motel door however when I opened it there was no one there, not only that but there were no footprints or any sign that anyone had ever came to our door. We thought one of the other workers were playing a trick on us , so I put on my coat and walked around the motel and discovered mine were the only footprints around the entire motel , no one had been out in the new fallen snow except me. The next morning we had it arranged where my wife and my room mates wife came to visit us for the weekend other than us going home . We were going to do some shopping and make a day of it at one of the large shopping malls , this was the first time our wives had driven up there.

However before we could leave the motel manager came to our door telling me that I had a long distance telephone call from Indiana, when I answered the phone the voice on the other end of the line said, " King is that you "? It sounded like my father's voice and I said, " Dad is that you? " There was a period of silence then the voice returned and told me that he was my folk's neighbor Bob Ridge and that he was calling for my mother to tell me that my father had a heart attack during the night and passed away.

We had my wives parents watch our children while we took the bus up to Indiana to my fathers funeral. I remember that my father's hair was brown and not white like I remembered it from the last time I had seen him, so I asked the funeral director about it and he said the only thing they had did to it was wash it and it had turned back to brown. That and the incident at the motel two nights earlier have remained in my mind as very unusual even after all this time. When he died he was 47 years old and he had quit drinking a couple of months earlier the cause of death was a major heart attack.

After my wife and I had gotten our affairs straightened out in Virginia and in North Carolina, we then moved back to Indiana. I went to work for a wrecker towing service in Fort Wayne who towed , serviced and repaired trucks for some of the freight services on the north side of Fort Wayne, Indiana. On February 1963 we had our third child which was a girl.

In the garage where we serviced the trucks we had a coal fired furnace which had a piece of steel on top of it to direct the flow of warm air out of the front instead of up.

One day in the winter I was walking toward the furnace when I tripped and as I fell forward my forehead hit this piece of steel cutting it open. I was trying to see how bad my head was cut by looking in the truck's west coast mirror however the blood was running in my eyes and I couldn't really tell. It was at this time that one of the drivers of one of the companies we worked for came into the garage and when he saw my face he called the police to take me to the hospital. As I mentioned before this was in the winter in the 60's and if I remember correctly the police drove some form of blazer or station wagon for their medical assistance calls. With the ice and snow on the highways their driving scared the daylights out of me and I was happy to arrive at the Parkview hospital all in one piece. They put eight stitches in my fore head. It was right after this incident that a gentleman who owned a 1953 Chrysler New Yorker had his oil changed at a local service station and somehow someone forgot to put the oil drain plug back. As he was driving it home the motor seized up . The service station's insurance company settled with him and as he was selling the car real cheap, I bought it and took it to a farm over by Butler Indiana that some of my friends lived on. There I removed the front wheels after putting the car on stands , I then crawled under the car and was attempting to remove the oil pan when the stands collapsed allowing the car to fall on me. Probably the fact that I had my arms up saved my life, because I was able to somehow take the weight of the car mostly on my arms and be able to come out from under it. Still the force of the car falling, broke my nose and badly damaged my face. My friends took me to the emergency room of the hospital.

## Chapter 9

When I would not stay at the hospital the doctor wouldn't prescribe anything for pain he said I could take Tylenol . He didn't want me to take stronger pain killers in case I had a concussion , he said stronger pain killers might put me to sleep permanently . A week later I was walking back to where the car was and I stepped on a Root beer mug that someone had broken and it cut into the side of my right ankle , I was again taken to the emergency room of the hospital, the doctor on call was the same doctor who had treated me on my previous visit and he said I had damaged some ligaments in my ankle also he advised me to take up some other form of things to do on a Saturday afternoon. I wised up a little bit and I junked that car.

At this time my wife and I were having problems, she took the children and went to live with her brother and his wife in Austin Texas but I missed her and went to Austin to try and work things out. We finally decided to work things out and we spent the next six years there. I went to work at Armour and Company , in their Austin plant they smoked and fully cooked hams and bacon. I originally was hired as a replacement smoke house operator to temporarily take the place of an injured employee who never did return to work. So I then became a permanent employee and I worked there for six years and during that time the other smoke house operator who had been there a long time and I were sometimes in charge of the plant, for example on weekends I was given the keys to take out the trash and have in case of an emergency.

My main job was operating the smoke houses, moving and weighing the hams and bacon, this was to find out the weight loss during the smoking and cooking process. I also performed other jobs , like boning hams, making brine solution , this is a form of pickle solution which is pumped into the hams before they are smoked and cooked, also I usually cleaned the smokehouses on the weekends and got them prepared for the next week.

There were actually two of us who were able to do these jobs because the company couldn't get a third operator trained for the night shift , they would end up not coming in at all or even some of them were caught stealing. So my normal working week was around 72 hours and a few times as many as 94 hours. Our plant was located at the end of Congress Avenue before it went over the river and it went east and west through the heart of Austin. You could just barely see the University tower from our loading dock.

It was on one hot summer day that we heard on the radio that there was a person on the University tower ,who was shooting people in and around the University. We went out and were standing on our loading dock and we were watching this small plane that was flying around the tower and we thought we could see puffs of smoke where this person was shooting at people when our plant manager came out and told us that the shooter was using some kind of rifle with a sniper scope on it and he might be able to hit us standing out there on the loading dock. I really believe we were too far away however we all went back inside until the shooting was over. The shooters name was revealed as Charles Whitman .

We later discovered that my wives brother, who was a milk man delivering milk, that particular morning was delivering at the houses on a street which was in sight of the tower not too far from where the people were being shot. His white suit probably made him stand out and he did not even know about the shooting until later. He had in fact as he found out later delivered milk to the house where the gunman had killed his mother before he went on his shooting spree. There were a lot of people killed and a lot more wounded that day. Some of those who were shot didn't even know someone was shooting at them until it was too late. There also were some heroes that day, people going into the line of fire dragging other people to safety. My wife and I volunteered to give blood, but there were a lot of people who had our type of blood and they didn't need ours. If I remember correctly we were living at 609 Harthan Street in Austin Texas at this time.

I believe we lived on Red River Street in Austin when president Kennedy was assassinated in Houston. That was really a sad day for the whole nation but it was really tough on the people who lived in Texas because it happened in their state. Then shortly after to have Jack Ruby kill Oswald really brought down a lot of our Texas friends.

The house where we lived on Harthan street was really a very unusual house, as it was built on a hill, the front of the house and the part we lived in was like any other house looking at it from the street. You had to walk up two steps to get onto the front porch to enter into the house, however this is where the similarity ended. When you walked to the back of our apartment and looked out the back door it was two stories down to the ground, and it had apartments in these lower levels.

The steps that went down to these apartments were located beside the house on both sides. One day one of our neighbors who had a home across the street from ours had in his front yard an exotic plant that bloomed only once every so many years, this was the time when you were able to get the seeds to plant more of these plants. Now the leaves on this plant were thin and flat and they could cut you if you weren't paying attention to what you were doing. This plant was planted very close to the sidewalk and one day when my son was running on this sidewalk he cut his arm on one of these leaves. He came home and took his baseball bat back and literally beat that plant to pieces. Unfortunately that was the year that it was blooming and the owner sued us. The case was thrown out of court because it was planted too close to the sidewalk and it had caused harm to my son, also such an exotic plant should have been better protected, this is what the judge said.

The next house we moved into was located at 2705 West 35<sup>th</sup> street, this turned out to be the last house we lived in Texas. During the time my wife and I lived in Texas, my brother moved to Texas, my younger sister and her husband moved to Texas and my mother sent my younger brother to live in Texas. My brother, my brother in law and I all joined the Moose at the same time and we used to work the doors at the auditorium when country music stars made appearances there. The Moose sponsored a lot of these type of events. One of my brothers went to work for the Falstaff beer company. He delivered beer in the city and also the lake routes in and around Austin.

One time he invited me to go with him after he was off work it was on a weekend, he was going out to visit some of these lakeside resorts and drink some beer, more or less make the rounds so to speak. I said sure and went with him as we were working our way around the different nightspots we were getting into places that were totally packed with people it seemed nearly everyone knew my brother since he delivered Falstaff beer which was a favorite beer at that time. It was at one of these places where it was so crowded I didn't think the doorman was going to let us in but he recognized my brother and left us enter they put us right up by the stage, while I was sitting there drinking a beer my brother wandered around through the place saying hello to all the people he knew .

A country singer was on the stage singing and I told this bartender that the cowboy who was singing really sounded a lot like Willie Nelson, he laughed and told me it was Willie that he would stop by now and then whenever he was in Austin and sing there it was one of the places he used to sing in before he started getting famous, around this time my brother was ready to move on and we went on to other places that night but I always remembered that night because seeing and hearing Willie Nelson made it a special night.

My younger sister and her family moved in with us when we rented a very large house on the outskirts of Austin. It had around a half an acre of land for all of our children to play in. Around the end of the 60's my mother who was still living in Indiana was with one of her bingo ladies and they were involved in an accident a high school student crossed the center line and hit them head on , as he was traveling faster than the speed limit it was a very bad accident.

My mother's heart had apparently quit and she was revived by the paramedics on the scene and she was taken to the Lutheran hospital in Fort Wayne Indiana , the other lady was also badly injured and had to have reconstructive facial surgery . I took a leave of absence from Armour & Co. It was the second one I had taken in the six years I had worked there, the first was when I had broken my leg on the job. My brother in law and I came back to Indiana to visit my mother in the hospital she was still in bad condition however she was pulling through and so after staying for a short period we went back to Austin and back to work. Mom had more surgery and was not doing so well and so I took another leave of absence to again visit her in the hospital, the plant manager had agreed to my leave of absence but while I was gone a new manager was put in charge of my plant and he said he had not gave me permission to leave and after we had had a few words he fired me. The Union said the Company couldn't do this and wanted me to fight it, but my mom was still in the hospital and we ended up doing something we had said we would never do. My sister and her family, me and my family all moved back to Garrett Indiana as my brother in law was a machinist we were going to purchase this Company who's owner had passed away and his family was not interested in the business, however this did not work out. My wife and I had said we would never return to live in Indiana, because she never did like the cold weather we have in Indiana and North Carolina weather is more like the Texas weather not as severely cold. In the six years we had lived in Austin I remembered it snowing only twice and it melted on the same day.

Cookie said he was taken to the police station and they lectured him about damaging city property and then they let him go. I need to mention that Cookie was a very strong person himself. One time they were building a garage out of concrete blocks near Cookies house and as I was coming over to visit him, I saw him come out of his house, he was very angry about something and he picked up one of those concrete blocks in each hand and as he walked right down the middle of the street, I heard him say some pretty strong words , then he threw the block in his right hand and you could actually hear it turning in the air making a woosh, woosh, woosh sound and it went about half the length of that street, then he threw the one in his other hand and as it went wooshing through the air our police car turned onto the street and it hit the street in front of their car exploding into small pieces and when they saw Cookie coming up the street they backed up and went in the other direction. I never did ask Cookie what his problem was that day, I really felt I was better off not knowing. He always was a very colorful person and unfortunately like me in his youth he was always in trouble and I have to admit some of it brought on by me.

I then went to work at Cooper Rubber Company in Auburn Indiana, in its past it had been at one time The Auburn Rubber Company and then had been sold becoming Cooper's Rubber Company, there I operated different types of rubber molding presses and also worked on the rubber extrusion line. At this time my brother was working at the McCray Refrigeration Company in Kendallville Indiana and he mentioned there were some openings I put in my application and was hired .

Working there I operated multiple punch presses, set up and operated a Hill Acme Kling Metal Worker, drill presses, metal shears also worked on assembling a new type of foam cooler for walk in refrigeration units, these units were capable of being assembled and disassembled in a minimum amount of time and staying colder for longer periods of time, units very suitable for the military. I also operated routers, band saws, table saws did all types of assembly work and played Euchre during our dinner break.

Now sometime in the past McCray Refrigeration had been sold to a Company called Litton Industries and when our Union contract expired and negotiations toward a new contract were being considered the Company wanted more concessions than our Union was willing to give and so the Union went on strike after a short period of time Litton dissolved and sold the Company and equipment thus terminating everyone's employment.

My brother and I put in our applications at the Warner Gear plant in Auburn Indiana, where we were both hired in 1973 , this Company also was sold at a later date and is now known as what I believe is Auburn Gear. My brother is still working there today. There I was trained to operate machines known as Bullards, New Britians , Fast o matics , industrial grinders, but eventually I bid into plant labor where I operated the mower, a floor sweeper, lift trucks and generally cleaned the plant doing janitorial work. One day at work as I was pulling this cart with metal parts on it the handle I was pulling it with broke causing me to spin around wrenching my back and it became difficult for me to walk.

It felt like I was trying to walk on stilts or something like that so I went to the company nurse and she sent me to the hospital where they took x-rays , then sent me and the x-rays to an orthopedic surgeon in Fort Wayne, Indiana. This specialist took x-rays also then told me that there was a suspicion of a preexisting condition which he called spondylolisthesis , he said the hospital x-ray showed a possibility of this but the x-rays he had done didn't show the exact same thing, he did all kinds of tests and eventually did a mylogram. He said there was a problem in my fifth lumbar region of my spinal cord that part of my problem may have been caused by the injury but part was my being born with this condition and it just had not surfaced until the injury brought it forward. The company and the company nurse said it hadn't occurred at the plant, even though she was the person who had sent me to the hospital where the first x-rays were taken. The orthopedic surgeon put me on light work but the company had me shoveling steel shavings which injured my back more and I was again taken off work by the Doctor. Every time the doctor would send me back to work with limitations on what I should do the company would have me doing things the doctor didn't want me to do , it would injure my back further and again the doctor would take me off work, this went on for about a year and so I filed a workman's comp. claim against the company, depositions were taken of all the people concerned with the case, mine, the orthopedic surgeon's, a company doctors, the company nurse and all of the attorneys .

The Judge ruled that I had suffered an injury to my back at the plant which had apparently brought forth this previous condition which I had from childhood even though I was unaware of it, he set forth a monetary settlement and then I went on Social Security Disability because of my back.

I'm going to back this story up to before I went to work at Warner Gear and then I'll return to this part.

In May of 1973 one evening as I was riding in the Garrett Police car with the then Captain Jerry Custer as we were riding and talking he was making his regular patrol rounds and as we came around to the back of what then was Caprinos grocery store we discovered a burglary in progress. Two young men were breaking into the store, while Captain Custer was handcuffing and arresting one of the suspects the other ran away and I ran after him. Just as I had caught up with him and was reaching out to grab him he leaped across this drain ditch and not seeing it, I tripped and fell, he was captured shortly after this. On July 29, 1973 I was awarded a certificate of appreciation from the city of Garrett for assistance against crime and it was in our local clipper. I believe my wife sent a paper to each one of her relatives if for no other reason than to show everyone that I was able to do something good besides marrying her.

It was at this time that some of the reserve police officers and some of the regular police officers thought that I might look into the possibility of joining the police reserves in Garrett.

The crime I had committed had been fourteen years ago when I was very immature and foolish and they were of a nonviolent nature. My wife and I had spent all of our time since that period changing our lives around. Also possibly because I had at one time been incarcerated myself I could relate with some of the people who were getting into trouble. Taking all of this in consideration my wife and I decided to give it a try, I seldom made any major decisions without conferring with my wife unless it was one of those right now type of things where you have to make a snap decision. I put in an application to join the Garrett police reserves and I explained in the application about my conviction and prison time in the Ohio state reformatory. I told them what had occurred at that time and the changes that my wife and I had made in our lives since then. I received an answer from the reserves that all of my current references were good but according to the by laws governing both the regular and the reserves that a person who had been convicted of a felony would not be allowed to join the Garrett police . At this point if I had been alone I might have said ok this is alright because you have to be fair with all the people not just part of them, however my wife felt that we should check into it further and see if there may not be some way around this law and we found that if the conviction could be overturned or a pardon given then the situation would change. I then sent a letter to the Ohio parole board and told them of my conviction and the sentence I had served, my prison number when I was there and what I had accomplished in the 14 years since that time and why I was trying to get this pardon.

That I was attempting to join the police reserves in Garrett. I felt that having been on the wrong side of the law and serving time in a young man's prison and then being placed on parole that I would have first hand knowledge of both sides of the criminal issue.

At this time our city judge Charles Quinn also wrote a letter to the parole board and he wrote it not as a judge but as a concerned citizen who was also writing for the Mayor of our town who at that time was Harris Hoeffel and the Chief of our police force who at that time was Harold Werkheiser And he asked that I be considered for a pardon, also at this time the Captain of the police reserves sent a latter to the parole board.

In the meantime I studied and passed A GED test for High School and received an achievement test certificate from the Garrett Keyser Butler community school corporation. After passing the GED and getting my high school certificate I was allowed to join the Garrett police reserves on a probationary period and with the understanding that if I couldn't get a pardon I could not become a reserve, in the meantime I was getting in radio and training time.

The Ohio Pardon and Parole Commission sent me a letter telling me that they had scheduled an appointment to see me. My sister Hazel said she would go with me and that we could use her car , she wanted to help me do this and she thought the trip would be interesting. When I appeared before the board I answered all of their questions as best a I could and presented all of the facts about the situation including the fact that without the pardon I would not be allowed to be a police reserve. Then my sister and I went home and we waited for their answer.

In the meantime I continued to be active in everything, then in 1976 I received a full and unconditional pardon from the then governor of Ohio governor Rhodes and it was approved by all 7 members of the Ohio Pardon and Parole Commission.

I feel that this was a very special accomplishment that I owe all to others, my wife and my sister Hazel, both of whom have passed away from cancer. Without the help of all of the people that I have mentioned and others that I have not mentioned I'm sure that this would never have come about. While I'm writing this story I would like to let Governor Rhodes and all the members of the Ohio parole board know that in the past twenty some years that I have never misplaced their faith in me, and my friends, I, and my departed wife thank them for trusting in me and also showing people that there are circumstances where our justice system notwithstanding all of the criticism it gets can work. I don't really think the system is flawed only some of the people involved. We have to remember and pay close attention to the fact that most judges are lawyers before they become judges and that gives them a tendency to sometimes bend to far in favor of other lawyers instead of the common folk .

On receiving the pardon I was then sworn into the Garrett police reserves, I then purchased a Smith and Wesson 38 caliber revolver which would be used to protect the citizens, other police officers and myself in the performance of my duties as a police officer. I then filed an application with the State of Indiana with my fingerprints and identification as a reserve police officer along with revolver's identification number.

The Indiana State Police then informed us that according to the 1968 gun control act passed by congress that anyone who had been convicted of a felony, could not own or have in their possession any type of a firearm or gun. Since this is a federal law in order for it to be overturned it would have had to have been mentioned in the pardon. Since it was not, the other way for me legally to own or have in my possession a firearm would be to obtain a waiver of disability from the Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearm Division of the Federal Government. We then sent letters to the ATF inquiring about a waiver of disability . Upon receiving this information from the Indiana state police department I surrendered my firearm into the custody of Captain Custer who put it in the police lock box at this time. An ATF officer came to my home and I gave him all of the information that I could like when and where I was born, all of the addresses I had ever lived at, and what my age was living at these different addresses where I had worked up to this point and information about everything that I could remember occurring during my lifetime. They then gave this information to whatever agents they had living or working in these areas, who would then use police, news media, library files and any information pertaining to me in order to compile as complete a history of my life as they could get. This also included medical, military and any and all documents that would relate to me at any time during my life. After all of this information was gathered they went through it and then made their determination based on everything that they then knew about me, getting one of these waivers was extremely difficult. I was then informed that I had been awarded a Waiver of disability.

The waiver of disability explains that this is only for what I had did in the past and not for any crimes that I might commit in the future. We then legally filed an affidavit in the Dekalb Superior Court regarding all of the circumstances leading up to and including the waiver of disability which would allow me to own and as a police officer carry a firearm . Once again I was sworn in as a police officer with full arrest powers .

In January 1976 I graduated from the Commercial Trades Institute of Chicago in the field of color television servicing, during their training you build a color television set, your own testing equipment and other electronic equipment you will need. I continued to pursue my hobby and training in electronics up until digital electronics were discovered, at this time I decided to stop working on radios and televisions .

I might mention at this time that as a reserve police officer we were like the regular officers constantly upgrading our training and skill level with new and different methods of police work. Which included first aid, traffic control, the proper way to control a crime scene, the type of information to get from witnesses of accidents or crime scenes the reason for this training was if a reserve were on duty without a regular officer available then he or she may be called upon to do what the regular officer ordinarily do. Our reserves would sometimes do these things but with the full knowledge that our main job was to assist the regular officer not replace them. Reserves need to be qualified in the use of the weapons used in police work and acquainted with all of their departments equipment , the different frequencies on the different types of radios and how to use them in the field , in the car, or on the station.

You need to know when and how to operate the sirens, the flashing lights the proper way to approach a vehicle you have stopped for some violation, how to properly fill out the log book, how to do paperwork on accidents or criminal reports. An example of what a reserve might do was when I assisted in the transfer of money from our old bank to our new bank building. This had to be accomplished without the criminal element knowing anything about it until after it was accomplished. As a reserve I also made traffic stops on speeding violations , on people under the influence, assisted with traffic control at accident scenes. We also had some major fires when I was a reserve, one that comes to mind was when a large propane tank at the Electric Motors Factory in Garrett had some form of control valve malfunction or rupture and it was spouting fire with a loud roaring noise and it was very difficult for the firemen and others to get the fire out. This was a very large tank and even after the fire was extinguished it was still considered to be potentially dangerous some type of spark could start it burning again it had to be loaded on vehicle and I rode with Captain Custer as we escorted it out of town to an area where the propane was safely transferred into another container.

Now as I'm looking back on this incident it may have been that Captain Custer may have been the Chief of police instead of Captain. Also a television crew was at the police station at a time when I had just came from the scene of the fire and I answered the questions on the nature of the fire and what was being done. I'm mentioning this because it shows a reserve may do anything it's also the only time I was ever on television.

I also drove our military 6x6 truck which was used for emergencies , I'm mentioning these things to give our readers some idea of what reserve police officers may be called upon to do. Now when I injured my back at Warner Gear it also limited my reserve police activities such as I could operate the radio at the station or write reports . I could not ride or drive a police cruiser or do very much walking. In 1978 I took a training course on Radiological monitoring , as we were engaged in the what then was known as the cold war with Russia with no idea if it could be escalated into some form of atomic warfare.

I received two different certificates on the same day for similar courses on radiological monitoring , one was for completion of an 8 hour course from the Indiana Department of Civil Defense. The police and Civil Defense departments work together during times of emergency like national or local disasters. I assisted Chief Custer with his k-9 unit who's name was Fritz, reserve officers assisted with Halloween patrols to help safeguard the children, also helped judge different types of events by the Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, girl Scouts and other events in or around our community.

When we would have our reserve police dance once a year I would draw and paint pictures which the reserves would sell during the dance. This money would be used for different things the reserves needed to buy like some of their own equipment, you see the reserves are a volunteer organization and they purchase most of their equipment with their own money, things like uniforms, hand weapons ,pistol belts, handcuffs and badges among other things.

In our small town of Garrett when I was a reserve officer, if there were things that needed to be done then the regular officers, the reserve officers, the civil defense volunteers and the entire city would often work as a team or family to get things done for an example during the fourth of July events at the park and around the city, the regulars and the reserves would control traffic, crowds at ball games, crowd work is not always what you might expect it includes helping a child find his or her parents or you may even have to treat some minor or major injury, or maybe just the presence of some form of police officer can give parents the feeling of security for their children, children are normally the number one priority of the police department along with the elderly. If I appear to have wandered a little off the subject my wife was always telling me that I was doing that and I apologize for it.

Probationary and radio time included I was a reserve police officer from 1975 until 1981, this was a relatively short period of time in my life but I think the accomplishments that were made both in and outside the department were worth their weight in gold and I would do it again in a heartbeat if it were possible. I believe I was among the first reserves in the history of our reserves to be retired from an active status retaining their last rank which for me was first sergeant . One of the reasons I retired from the reserves was because I developed serious Bronchial Asthma problems and I was having trouble breathing doing everyday things like walking let alone trying to run , also I had become really overweight which was also affecting my asthma and my continuing to be a reserve I felt might jeopardize another officers safety or even their life .

An example would be if I were needed and I could not get there in time to help them. I told everyone of my intention to quit and my reasons for doing so and this was when it was decided to retire me so I could leave with my first sergeant rating. I believe that everyone felt that they had worked as hard getting me in as me and mine had , and this was rightly so. Everyone had a right to be proud of assisting me in accomplishing what I had accomplished after all we did what some people said could not be done. To go from a convicted felon to a reserve police officer has made me feel like that frightened delinquent has finally grown up, but he couldn't have done it alone. I felt then and I still feel today seventeen years later, that to serve as a reserve police officer was one if not the greatest achievement of my life and just possibly it helped pay back to my community for some of the problems I had created in my younger years . One of my main reasons for writing this story is to try and tell the kids of today that what I did in my childhood years was wrong and to look back on these things and see what I did makes me wonder how much more I could have accomplished if I had not wasted so much of my life doing the wrong things. Truthfully I did not think they were cool then and I do not think they are cool now. They are the things that I did, I cannot change them I can only go on trying to do better things with my life . I really want the young people and the adults of today also to know that if you have already made some of the mistakes that I have made it is not too late to change them. You may have to work at it harder than anything you have worked at before but the end result will be worth it.

To make mistakes is a part of being human however being able to correct these mistakes and put them behind you is also human. I read a sign at a place where I worked that said, The person who says that something is impossible to do, usually has to get out of the way of someone who is already doing it. We are now back to the place in the story after I had injured my back at Warner Gear and I was put on disability.

From nineteen eighty until nineteen eighty two vocational rehabilitation assisted me in entering into college at Fort Waynes I.U.Purdue trying to get an associate of science degree in commercial art and I was down to where I only needed fifteen credit hours to graduate but it was at this time that vocational rehabilitation assisted me in obtaining a job with Magnovox in their Garrett facility . As my wife was recovering from a stroke she had in nineteen seventy nine we really needed health insurance coverage and we also needed an income so the job with Magnovox was a must. I have never really felt that I quit on my art career I just went forward in another direction . My wife had to go through extensive therapy just to get back on her feet. Her specialist told her she had to quit smoking that it was a contributing factor to her having the stroke. He told her that him and his associates rated people according to what they were doing and their life style and their rating was from one to ten, ten being the highest risk person toward having another stroke however in her case he would rate her a twelve. She had been trying to smoke a cigarette while she was experiencing the stroke which had occurred while she was at work at the Essex plant in Auburn Indiana. She was taken directly to the Dekalb hospital in Auburn and then transferred to Parkview hospital in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

This was where she first met this Neurologist who treated her he also told her that if she did not quit smoking that he would be so sure that she would suffer another stroke that he would put it in writing and sign it. For her it was one of the most difficult things that she ever had to do to quit smoking. She had started smoking around the age of twelve and at this time had been smoking for around twenty seven years. She did quit and I'm sure this bought her some extra time. She was never able to return to work because as she was recovering from the stroke she began experiencing kidney problems. The kidney specialist told us that her kidneys had been damaged when she was a child through one of the childhood diseases that she had.

I might mention at this time that I also had smoked from around the age of fourteen until the age of forty which was around twenty one years. It was on a visit to my doctors office one day that I saw this photograph of what a persons lungs looked like after they had smoked for around twenty years and then another photograph showed what these same lungs looked like after the smoker had quit for a period of time . The difference was like night is to day and I decided at that time to quit smoking. Like most smokers I had attempted to quit in the past but always started right back up again . The difference I believe was that this time I really wanted to quit not half way but completely . I bought this program called seven days to freedom and by the seventh day I had actually smoked the last cigarette that I would ever smoke in my life. I am now sixty three and I have never had the urge to smoke since I quit twenty three years ago. I believe most people who say they want to quit , truthfully do not totally want to give it up.

Back when we started to smoke most people including doctors were really not terribly concerned whether a person smoked or didn't smoke, there was no knowledge of whether or not it would hurt you in your later years. After all doctors smoked , athletes smoked even movie stars and scientists smoked if it were bad for you these people wouldn't be smoking. Right ? I don't know how we were so terribly wrong but we were .

When my wife had her stroke I was set up at the Shipshewana Flea Market and my sister called me and I came to where my wife was in the hospital . I had never seen my wife where she couldn't talk, she later told me she knew what she wanted to say but it wouldn't come out right when she tried to speak. Through therapy she managed to get back a lot that she had lost and was even able to put up with me and my problems.

In May of 1988, my wife's kidney specialist was preparing my wife and I for the realization that her kidneys were starting to fail , that her body was losing protein through her kidneys. He began showing us different ways that dialysis could be performed and what we would have to do, he also brought up the subject of a kidney transplant. She decided to check further into the transplant operation and all three of our children were tested to see if they were compatible to her . They were tested at the Indiana University hospital in Indianapolis Indiana. Here it was discovered that all three children qualified as donors. My wife and our youngest daughter decided she would be the donor. In May of 1989 my wife and my daughter went into the hospital in Indianapolis where our daughter donated a kidney that was transplanted into my wife, this operation took a long time.

First they had to remove my daughters kidney and while they were putting her back together her kidney had to be transplanted into my wife. My daughter was then married to her third husband and while they were recovering from the operations he and I stayed in the Lincoln Hotel which is located directly across the street from the hospital. After both women had recovered enough to be released from the hospital, my wife had to make two trips a week to the hospital for them to check on the status of the kidney to make sure that her body was not trying to reject the kidney. The doctors had to be constantly changing the amount of each medicine she was being given until her kidney and her body were in some form of synchronization so it wouldn't be rejected.

My wife and I went to a lawyer and we put the property and the two houses we owned in my daughter's name with us having lifetime leases on them. This would ensure that as long as we lived we would live there. From the time of the transplant my wife lived seven years which without the transplant I don't believe she would have lived that long. My life was centered on my wife. I had always felt that I would die first as my father had only been around 47 years old when he died and I felt that I also would die young. I never really even thought about life without her. She was my life, she was my initiative, my every reason for living, without her there was and is to this day only loneliness .I have found no one to help fill this space in my life. After the transplant I really thought we were surviving and I just did not want to realize she was starting to develop heart problems and she had one bad kidney rejection where she had to be put back in the hospital while they readjusted her medicine.

She started getting all kinds of medical problems. For an example she started getting stress fractures in her bones, her skin on her hands would get bruised just by bumping them, some of the anti rejection medicine she was taking were some form of hormone medication which caused her to grow fuzzy hair similar to a mans beard and she had to use a cream to remove them . Her heart problems had her using glycerin tablets, her diabetic problem was more difficult to control and she was starting to have problems with her eyes. Her doctor did a partial colonoscopy examination and he discovered she had colon cancer so a full colonoscopy was done the following day and it was discovered that the cancer was such that they did immediate surgery removing part of her colon. The cancer had already entered her lymph system and it was in her liver. She was fortunate to survive the surgery with her heart condition after she had recovered from the surgery enough to be able to get around chemotherapy was began to try and remove the cancer. However because of her immune system being suppressed by the anti-rejection medicine her chemotherapy was of a new nature and her different medicines were constantly being juggled around and we both knew at this time she was in a world of trouble . She would go in the hospital and have to get blood transfusions to build her blood back up where the chemotherapy was wearing it down. When she returned home from the hospital she would be cold for a while then she would be alright . That night we held each other and both of us cried , she cried because she wanted to live and me because I couldn't face losing her . This was very difficult for her, she wanted to be there while her grandchildren were growing up

Some members of our family did not want to hear us talking about her dying . My daughter was trying to tell us that we were in denial because all of the information she was reading on the type of cancer my wife had was telling her it was terminal. I have to admit that we didn't want to admit it also her Iconocologist was telling her after they did the MRI and the cat scans that the cancer in her liver was shrinking , then on Monday February 9, 1995 when she was making a scheduled visit to her kidney specialist her blood pressure dropped so dangerously low that she collapsed in the doctors waiting room . She was the admitted to the Lutheran hospital and after they had built her blood pressure back up to a decent level it was agreed that she would be coming home on the following Monday. Through out everything she never gave up fighting for her life right up to the very end. Her fight was not only with the cancer and the chemotherapy but also with the transplanted kidney which kept wanting to quit also. I had taken over the job of preparing meals and housework before she went into the last hospital stay and she would tell me she didn't feel right about it, I explained to her that this was the way it should be , look back at all of the years when she was taking care of me and most of the time I wasn't even sick. Her and I talked about the fact that my son wouldn't bring her grandchildren up to visit with her and we had to make trips to where they lived . We believed that his problem was that he didn't want his children to be around her and I because we were always talking about death and dying . We really felt that he was in denial and didn't want to admit his mother was dying and didn't want to talk about it at all. Then rather suddenly she was gone and it was too late to do anything.

On the Monday I was getting ready to go down to the hospital to bring her home, she called me and told me that they had just informed her that she had pneumonia. This was devastating news to both of us because she was not even able to take a pneumonia shot , let alone get the disease . It was a death sentence because she had no immune system to fight off any type of disease and she was immediately started on anti-biotics which never caught up with the pneumonia.

They started her on oxygen and by Wednesday she was on 100 percent , Thursday afternoon at 1:05 PM the hospital called me as I was getting ready to go visit her and they told me she had just passed away. At that point and time I felt that my life should have ended also. She was my life, everything that I had accomplished in the forty one years we were married was for her to have after I was gone. Without her everything was so meaningless from then on I just went from day to day life appeared no longer an important issue. One day when I was walking in my yard I stepped into a hole and fell hurting my right ankle which swelled up on both sides. I did go to my family doctor who ordered x-rays but they were difficult to read as I had arthritis and peripheral neuritis in both feet and he wanted me to stay off my feet for a period of time which I was unable to do and I continued to walk on it . Eventually I developed a sore on the side of my ankle and my family doctor sent me to a doctor who works on your feet. This doctor also had x-rays taken and gave me some ointment to put on it and said that I might have to go into the St. Joseph hospital in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

One day my daughters husband came over to my house to see how I was doing and I wasn't doing so well. This was this daughters fifth husband and the EMS was called and they took me to the Dekalb Memorial hospital in Auburn Indiana. WE discovered that I had went from 335 pounds down to 260 pounds in less than a month I also had a fever and infection in my leg where the sore was. This was on December the 27<sup>th</sup> 1996 and my family doctor was trying to get me admitted to the wound care facility In the St. Joseph hospital. This was difficult to do being around the holiday period however an appointment was set up for the 30<sup>th</sup> of December . My brother took me from Dekalb to St. Joseph where after examining my foot they did a thing which they called debridement.

This is a process by which they remove the dead tissue in your foot where the infection is by cutting it away unfortunately now and then they may cut on a live area which is very painful . I was informed by the medical team that was taking care of me, that my foot would have to be amputated below the knee. But before that could be done my infection had to be brought under control and this was done with anti biotics and the help of a unit called a hyperbaric chamber , which is the same type of unit used to help divers when they suffer from a condition called the bends, which occurs when they go to deep to fast or come up to fast . A layman's idea of how it works is this , you are placed in this chamber and the air is slowly put under pressure putting you whole body under pressure then you are given oxygen to breath which travels through your body under this pressure which since it is getting oxygen causes it to heal at a faster rate .

Doing this does not in any way hurt you but I found it very uncomfortable and in my case they had to put a tube in my right ear because it could not adjust for the pressure changes in the chamber. Also I had to put a tablet under my tongue which helped relax me so I could make it through the treatment with some form of comfort otherwise I would become very nervous . At first I was undergoing this treatment twice a day as they had to get rid of the infection before they could amputate my leg. I would like to say at this time that it would be very difficult to find doctors and nurses who would be more dedicated and caring for their patients then these people. They in a matter of speaking bend over backward to help make irritating people like me as comfortable as they possibly can , they patiently put up with all of the patients problems going from one to another while they also are going through the atmospheric pressure change with us and when we are finished they continue to do this day after day. If you are going to talk about unsung hero's and heroin's then you would need only to visit a hospital and watch the people there go through what they call a normal day and then wonder if you or I would have the compassion or the patience to even attempt this type of work.

The doctors discovered that I have a problem when I sleep where a person stops breathing during their sleep. They decided to give me a spinal block instead of putting me under anesthetic because I have a living will and they did not want me dying on them. So on January 6, 1997 they gave me a spinal block and removed my right foot , I continued the hperbaric treatments to help it heal.

It was during one of these treatments that the effects of the spinal block began wearing off and as feeling was coming back into my body it was like it feels when a part of your body goes to sleep and starts waking up with pins and needles all over you, this really was a difficult time for me. Also I might mention that the first night after the leg was amputated was a very painful night for me even with the painkillers I was given it was a very difficult time. They had me on one of their pump type devices that administers the medicine through the IV by my pressing a button when I needed it. I also went through physical therapy like building up my body , teaching me how to use crutches, walkers, and a wheelchair. While I was in the hospital my son and a friend of his went to my house and in freezing snowing weather they built a ramp for my wheelchair. They have probably never realized how very grateful I was that they did this for me, so I'm telling everyone who reads my story at least that many people will know.

I came home from the hospital on January 28, 1997 and had to do all of the things that people take for granted on one leg, either using crutches, the walker or my wheelchair. Simple things like getting something out of the refrigerator, washing dishes, washing clothes, until February 17<sup>th</sup> 1997 at which time I received my first prosthetic leg and I have been more active with it than I was before .

As I've been writing this story it seems that during the middle of the night when I'm awakened with my asthma problems that I can think of all kind of things to write in my story, then when I wake in the morning I have forgotten most of them. Losing my leg really was one heck of a wake up call concerning my diabetic condition.

So I have been keeping a better watch on the things that I eat and keep my sugar levels more under control than I ever had before. I feel like in a way I'm writing this story more for my wife and her memory than for myself. Like everything really was for her, I wrote her on the average at least one poem a week when I was at Mansfield and most of them are included and it was with her help and suggestions that I even accomplished most of the things that I have been able to do. She passed away February 1995 it's now December 12, 1998 and I'm now beginning to get terribly lonely especially in the evenings and it being around the holidays finding a female someone is like impossible . The first problem that I ran into is that I don't even know how to date or what to look for or even how to know a woman is available . You just cannot go up to every woman you find interesting and ask them about their lives because some of them get angry at you. Usually the women I find interesting already have companions who also found them interesting and they are not available, and even if they don't have companions a lot of them don't want companions. The younger women aren't interested in an old coot like me and I have to admit that I'm lacking in initiative without someone to care for. I don't want you to misunderstand me, I do feel fortunate that I have Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security , my own home [ well mine and the banks, ha, ha,] in fairly good health, the ability to get from place to place, all of my many friends and my close relatives because I know there are many people right here who are homeless and less fortunate than I.. But even realizing all of this without someone to cuddle with life is just one gigantic struggle each and every day.

Someone asked me once if there were a way when I got up in the morning if I could tell if it was going to be a good day or not and I told them that if I can wake up and get out of bed it's going to be a good day maybe a little miserable but good however the morning that I don't wake up at all for me will not be a good day. Unfortunately I don't seem to have many goals in life anymore and it seems like a real struggle just to continue.

My friends all tell me that there's someone out there for me but if I don't know where or even how to look I'll probably never find her. Some of this dialog I wrote at four o'clock in the morning probably because I was feeling sorry for myself and I couldn't get back to sleep , so rather than just sit and stare at the wall I felt I should be writing something. I also wrote a poem which is in this story titled The Real Prison. I have had to start all over again with the house and property my wife and I used to own, because we put it in one of our children's name and they borrowed money on it and their debts were also charged against it . They stopped making the mortgage payments and were letting it be foreclosed on me when they deeded it back over to me. If an attorney had not had me run a title search I would never had known this until the mortgage company had foreclosed on me. I have had to sell one of the properties and borrow money on the other one to regain part of what I had already one time paid for while my wife and I were raising that child . We set the property up with my wife and I having a life estate on it , and rather than pay money that she owed me she agreed to deed the property back into my name and when she did she sent me and the court clerk this letter .

George here's your paper, now as far as you and I are concerned-- I no longer wish any ties with you! Just think of it this way- I died when my mother died !!! So just stay out of my life 'cause as far as I'm concerned you no longer exist Do you understand me. And it was signed with her name. I'm mentioning this because I will more than likely be spending the rest of my life paying on a house that I had already spent most of my life buying the first time around .

Some of the children of today feel that the entire world owes them a living just because they are alive I guess. What I am trying to say is before you turn things over to any of your children put it in your will so they get it after you are gone. That way you will have a better chance of it not affecting your life while you are trying to live it. Remember you are going to need all of your strength just to survive you and your spouses daily health problems. Remember that your children can terribly hurt you because they may not have the same type of commitment to you that you have to them. I want to mention to parents out there today be extremely careful in how you manage your affairs in relation to your children or you may end up with no affairs to manage.

I have had parents of today tell me that they don't believe there's anything wrong with smoking marijuana and some people even want to legalize it. If these people are saying this around their children then it should not come as a surprise when they discover their children doing drugs. When I was a young person I never would have did anything to deliberately hurt my parents and most of the people that I grew up with felt the same way.

Something very serious has happened to some of the children and people of today.

People are using handicapped parking spaces when they aren't handicapped , could it be that they are too lazy to walk or maybe they just like picking on handicapped people because they feel the handicapped people cannot do anything about it. Handicapped parking spaces say that your vehicle must have some form of handicapped notification or it will be towed. Maybe I've never been in the proper place but I have seen all types of vehicles who weren't handicapped in those parking places and in all of my sixty three years I have never seen one being towed. What is really strange to me about this is that I have had people who are not handicapped and are parking in a handicapped space hold a door open for me because I use a cane and go up and down stairs slowly but yet they will at the same time park in a handicapped parking space even though they are not handicapped. There are so many things that I have trouble remembering while I'm writing this and then I remember them later after I've passed that time period, so what I've decided to do is when I run across one of these instances I'm going to put them in at this later time.

For an example one evening when I was around thirteen or fourteen another kid and I borrowed two bicycles in Garrett and rode them over to the Silver Moon skating rink which was located between the city of Auburn and the city of Waterloo. [ it is no longer there ] This is around ten miles on two different highways and it was getting dark , after we had arrived we discovered the skating rink was not even open to the public that evening and we could not get in.

To make matters worse on the way back to Garrett it started to misty rain and we were stopped by an Indiana State Police officer who informed us that we could not be riding the bicycles on the highway without lights and the proper reflectors . So we had to walk the bicycles back to Garrett and the next day we were picked up by the police for taking the bicycles without the owners permission however no charges were ever filed against us because we had returned the bicycles and had not in any way damaged them.

One time we had a person who traveled with the Carnival who had a wrestling bear, this was a relatively small bear weighing around four or five hundred pounds, Cookie thought that it would be neat to wrestle a bear and he put the bear down on it's back, and the owner of the bear asked Cookie not to wrestle the bear anymore because he was concerned that Cookie might hurt his bear. I'm going to dedicate this story mainly to my wife whom I miss more than life itself also to Cookie who also has passed away and also to all of the people who I again must say without them there would be no story.

One of the purposes of this story and the reason I am telling you some of the bad things I did in my childhood is to tell the children and the adults of today that it is possible to turn your life around and you can accomplish things that may seem impossible at the time. It will take a lot of hard work and it doesn't happen overnight and you will need the help of friends. I mean real friends not just people who say they are friends and then walk away when they are asked for help, not people who will steer you into more trouble, but people who believe in commitment, in faith in you, who will be honest with you and most of all care what will really become of you in the future .

The real important thing that I believe I should tell you and I know you have heard it many times before is please try not do the type of things that I'm telling you I did in my past. I'm only telling these things to show you what not to do and I'm asking you to please learn from my mistakes. It took me years to accomplish turning my life around and if I had not had to spend all of that time and energy doing that, think of how much further along I would be now and how much of a better life my wife might have enjoyed if I had never did the bad things in my life. Those who read this have that opportunity to make the most out of the life that is there for them and if you work hard when your young and stay on the right path you might be able to relax and possibly even assist others when you get older.

Back when I was a young boy going to the movies that I have mentioned before there were these older couple who had a popcorn stand in an alcove beside the Garrett Bank these people sold popcorn cheap enough that poor kids like me could afford to buy it, and if my sometimes poor memory is correct , I believe their names were Jack and Flossie, these people were like family to us poor kids and I believe they should be remembered as a part of the history of Garrett and if they have any relatives who are still alive they should be proud to have had people like that because they were really good people. It's a shame that I cannot remember more about the town of Garrett because it has a lot of railroad history in its past . At the end of this story I'm going to put a copy of my pardon and other certificates that I have received and also more of my poems for the readers who like poetry.

SO MUCH I WASTED

by

George J. Peters

December 7, 1998

The time has come to write my book, the story of my life.

The good times of my childhood, the dying of my wife.

Of all the bad that I have done, the wrong things from my past.

What little good I know I've done, will any of these things last ?

I'm sixty three years old right now and I really do feel my age.

I feel like I could write forever and fill page after page.

But most of my life was standing still, or moving in reverse.

My childhood years were wasted so, my adult life even worse.

I've been looking for a new companion, to help me through my years.

So far it's been a terrible waste of time and just opened up new fears.

The young women are way to young for an old coot like me.

And the older women aren't interested, they want to be fancy free.

I wanted to put this all in a poem but I really don't know why.

You can read everything in my story, if I get it written before I die.

You see when we are young we want to be old but life goes by too fast.

Suddenly we are old, the years really did go by, now we want to live in the past.

Most of my story I've already written, with a very small part to do.

And now that I've finished with this poem, you can read it to.

WHO  
by  
George J. Peters  
December 2, 1998

Who made the mountains reaching to the sky? I know it wasn't you and it surely wasn't I.

Who made the world so big and round? Who made the trees and molded the ground?

Who makes the clouds so fluffy and white? Against a background of blue a beautiful sight.

Who made the rabbit, the cat and the dog? Who made the Chicken, the cow and the hog?

Some things almost anyone can do, but I can't build a Universe. Can you?

Can you be everywhere at the same time? Watch people kill your son and still be kind?

We can reach with our hands up to the sky, But we can't touch heaven that land on high.

God can do any of those things I've said, and go even further bringing people back from the dead.

Who made the snow that softly falls down? No two snowflakes alike have ever been found.

The one who made all of these wonderful things, said follow me and I will make you kings.

Who made the night that is so dark? Who told Noah how to build the ark?

Who made the planets and stars up above? God made them all with his undying love.

God placed them there just for you and me and the day is coming when he'll set us free..

The time will come when we'll meet God our King and when that time comes we'll hear the angels sing.

There will be much rejoicing on that happy day and sadly all the sinners they will have to pay.

So pray to let him know that you really care and when the roll is called in heaven your name will be there.

SO MUCH FOR SO LITTLE

by

George J. Peters

November 27, 1998

The devil tries to tempt us all, you must be careful or you will fall.

He tempts us each and every day but we don't have to go his way.

Jesus loves the weak and the strong, he's always asking you to come along.

Jesus doesn't ask anything we can't do, he says, follow me because I love you.

You know that the devil is an evil foe, he'll steer you wrong if you will go.

And if you follow in the devil's way, you know what terrible price you'll pay .

The choice is really up to you, what you'll become and what you'll do.

There is a mansion waiting for you, just follow Jesus is all you must do.

No battles to fight no wars to win, just say yes to Jesus and no to sin.

For all of eternity the joy you'll share, all of your loved ones will also be there.

So little you must give for such a large return,

And the other choice would be forever you would burn.

Jesus died upon the cross just for me and you,

Take his hand and follow him is all that you must do.

GOD IS LIFE  
by  
George J. Peters  
December 2, 1998

Don't you feel his presence? It is everywhere.  
Don't you feel his love? We breathe it in the air.  
Don't you feel the joy? Because it is all around.  
Everyone is waiting for God's son Jesus to come down..  
Lord there will be rejoicing but some of us will weep,  
For some will be thrown in hell, but most God will keep.  
When Jesus the Savior says come with me,  
Follow me to heaven and forever you'll be free.  
There'll be no more sorrow there'll be no more grief.  
Satan will not be up there sneaking around like a thief.  
For he'll be bound in chains cast into hell and damnation,  
While all of Gods followers will have eternal salvation.  
But you really must be saved and take Jesus by his hand.  
Give him your heart and soul ,he'll give you the promised land.  
When he says follow me, you must go then, you cannot wait,  
Because then and only then will you enter through heavens gate.

IN A DREAM  
by  
George J. Peters  
November 27, 1989

I saw you in my dreams last night, in the arms of someone new,  
I cried oh how I cried sweetheart, what else could I do?  
And although it was only a dream, my darling it seemed so real,  
Oh my love, oh my dearest dear, you must know how I feel?  
I saw you kiss him darling in my dream last night,  
I wished that it was me that you were holding tight.  
Every time I think of you no matter when or where,  
Oh my dearest sweetheart I wish that you were there.  
Pretty darling, pretty darling, I love you don't you see?  
But I'm not in this dream and it really bothers me.  
If I could only touch your lips, so red and soft and fine.  
Then my darling, oh my dear, I'd know you're really mine.  
It was only a dream my sweet, a nightmare in the night,  
But it seemed so real to me that I cried out in fright.  
For you know I love you dearly, no one else will ever do,  
And no matter dear what happens, I'll always be in love with you.

PAGE 2—The Garrett Clipper, Thursday, January 27, 1977

## Reserves serve community



Left to right — Joe Cattell, Bob Blessinger, Ron Livergood and Bill Pogue.



Left to right — Mike Bennett, George Peters, Larry Stalter and Gary Carr. Absent when the pictures were taken: Larry Yariot, Bill Gunion, John Stone, Gilbert Lawhead, Bill Carlin, Ben Ricketts, Gary Warfield, Harley Quince and Terry Malcolm.

# Commercial Trades Institute

Chicago



Illinois

This is to Certify that

George J. Peters

has completed the prescribed course of study in  
Color Television Servicing  
and is hereby awarded this

## Diploma

In Witness Whereof, We have affixed our signatures  
and the seal of the school at Chicago, Illinois  
on January 13, 1976.



*Kenneth D. Kest*  
President

*Rolva Nottenburg*  
Educational Director

STATE OF OHIO  
**Executive Department**  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

*Columbus*

IN THE NAME AND BY THE AUTHORITY OF  
THE STATE OF OHIO  
JAMES A. RHODES, GOVERNOR

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME, GREETING:

WHEREAS, at the January term of the Court of Common Pleas held in and for the County of Fulton in the year of our Lord, One Thousand Nine Hundred and Fifty-Eight, GEORGE J. PETERS, No. 58020, OSR, was convicted of the crime of Forgery-2 counts, and sentenced by said Court to imprisonment for a term of One (1) to Twenty (20) years, and

WHEREAS, the Pardon of said GEORGE J. PETERS has been unanimously recommended by all seven (7) members of the Parole Board participating,

THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in the Governor by the Constitution and statutes of this state, I DO HEREBY grant to the said GEORGE J. PETERS a FULL and UNCONDITIONAL PARDON.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my name and caused the Great Seal of the State of Ohio to be affixed at Columbus, this \_\_\_\_\_ in the year of our Lord, one thousand nine hundred and seventy-six.

*James A. Rhodes*  
GOVERNOR

ATTEST:

*Led W Brown*  
Secretary of State

*Certificate of Appreciation*

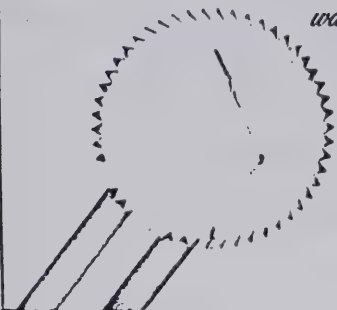
FROM

Police Department, City of Garrett

GEORGE J. PETERS

*Issued in appreciation and recognition of the assistance rendered by you as a distinguished citizen  
of your community in support of the law enforcement profession and their fight in the  
war against crime in your city and this nation*

Issued this 29 day of JULY 1973



*John A. Simon*  
MAYOR

*Robert A. Simon*  
CHIEF OF POLICE



from the Armed Forces of the United States of America.

*This is to certify that*

PRIVATE GEORGE JUNIOR PETERS 1325041

*was Honorably Discharged from the*

**United States Marine Corps**

*on the* 28<sup>th</sup> *day of* OCTOBER 1960 *This certificate is awarded*

*as a testimonial of Honest and Faithful Service*

*M. G. Letscher*

M. G. LETSCHER, FIRST LIEUTENANT, USMC



State of Indiana

# Achievement Test Certificate

## High School Level

This Certifies That

GEORGE JUNIOR PETERS

having qualified for this certificate by passing the General Educational Development Tests (High School Level) in Conformance with the provisions of Rule M-3, Section 2, of the Revised Rules and Regulations of the Commission on General Education of the Indiana State Board of Education, is awarded this Certificate at GARRETT HIGH SCHOOL in the State of Indiana, FEBRUARY 13 19 75

GARRETT-KEYSER-BUTLER COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION

Charles H. Huff  
Superintendent

Paul L. McJannet  
Principal

Name of School Corporation

John L. Butts  
President

Maurice Christopher  
Secretary

Charles B. Rowe  
Treasurer

Glenn Dey  
S. H. M. Total

I wrote another poem and in this poem I speak of my love for God , that I love him now and I always will. So this poem for me is a dedication anew of my life for Jesus Christ. I had drifted away from him from when I was younger and really only recently had began to go to church again. I was searching for something that was really always within my grasp except I wasn't willing at that time to make that final commitment to Jesus and to his father and mine, God Almighty. I knew that when I made that decision it would be for the rest of my life and I feel that the devil was trying to keep me from doing that.

And on January the 20<sup>th</sup> 1999 I wrote a poem entitled "For Love Not Fear " and in this poem I speak of the love I have for Jesus , however just writing the poem was not enough for me. I needed to let people know about how and what I felt and they allowed me to read my poem to the entire congregation I want everyone to know that I love the Lord Jesus and my life will have to be, even if I were to die today or tomorrow without notice or without warning, full of love and joy for being allowed to know the Lord my God.

This poem will follow this for my condensed version of the story of my life which is not the end of my life but just the beginning of a new part of it . May God bless you and give you some kind of good message from what I have written, and I must apologize for not being able to do a better job of it. I feel that whatever talents God endowed me with writing is really not one of them, now I must find out what more he would like me to do in my life here on this earth.

I know the story and the poetry need to be completed and I need to continue to play the harmonica . At the present time I am going to three different churches and I'm going to try and continue this because all three have different things to offer me and I believe at this time this is what God wants me to do. If you take the time to read my story then you will know that if I can come this far from where I originally was then I'm sure you can also from whatever place you are in your life, but you will need to gain friends to help you. It has to be the type of friends who will help you go forward in your life not drag you backward or try and keep you from accomplishing whatever you could be able to accomplish and if you can get Jesus involved in your life anything God wants you to do you will be able to do. You will have to go to him because he has already allowed us to kill his only son for us to have everlasting life and by excepting Jesus our first step for happiness and joy forever has been taken. I wish you all the best of everything in your life and may God go with you.

I discovered one of the things Jesus wanted me to do at 4:30 AM on February 10, 1999. I woke up with this song in my mind and had to get up and write it right then, I tried putting it off until the morning , however that really was not acceptable and so I did it right then . Later during the week I had to change one of the verses in the song to make it right. The music also came with the song but I do not know how to write music notes and so I played the song on my harmonica and sang with it. However I keep telling people that I do not sing well but at least it lets them know how the song goes.

I had written only one other song and I had to send it off to get the music put to it, so You see normally I would have no idea what type of music to put with it. When Jesus wants you to write a song you do not do it halfway, you do the entire thing and you really love doing it. It is like being lifted up beyond where you normally would be. I do not mean with a swelled head or anything like that but I mean spiritually , like joy you have never known before. Unfortunately for those people who do not know Jesus as their personal Savior can not feel this fullness in their lives. I will put this song on the next page so everyone who reads my story may also have this song. Actually I was just a tool of his being used to write this song but I really feel blessed that he allowed me to do it in the first place .


Since I have been reborn in Christ I see things in a different way it is no longer my Doing things for me individually that is important unless it is something for him. The depression that I used to feel has been lifted from my mind , I no longer have any Problems that I used to have . I still Love and miss my wife very much but I have came To the realization that my wanting to keep her here for my benefit would have been Terribly wrong because she is with the Savior now and knows peace and happiness.

Any way I'll stop running my mouth and put this song on the next page.

## FOR LOVE NOT FEAR

by

George J. Peters

January 20, 1999 

Do you really read the Bible or think of what it has to say?

Or do you just wander through it saying tomorrow's another day ?

We always put things off that we don't want to do right then.

Unfortunately while we are waiting our life could suddenly end.

When we go to church and we bow our heads and pray,

Are we really telling Jesus we are sorry for what we say ?

Or are we temporarily frightened about death coming suddenly.

Shouldn't I be giving the right reason why I want him to save me ?

Not because I'll burn forever even though this is also true,

But the love and not the fear should make me do what I must do.

Which is follow the Lord Jesus to my mansion on the hill.

Because to know him is to love him and I know I always will.

Next time you read the Bible and a voice says come into my light.

Give your heart and soul to Jesus because you know it will be right.

## SONG OF LOVE

By

George J. Peters

February 11, 1999 ©

I've got to be cared for by Jesus, I've got to be loved by Jesus.

I've got to give my soul to Jesus, I've got to give my heart to Jesus.

{chorus} It is love, love, love. It is joy, joy, joy.

It is happiness for eternity, As he gave his life for me.

My heart sings with joy for Jesus, My soul hurts for the love of Jesus.

My eyes see no other love but Jesus, My body sits at the feet of Jesus.

{chorus}

We need to cry out to the world for Jesus, We need to give to one another for Jesus.

We need to feel the presence of Jesus, We need to stop all hate through Jesus.

{chorus}

We've got to prepare the world for Jesus, We've got to help one another for Jesus.

We've got to love the world for Jesus, We'll get to go to glory with Jesus.

It is love, love, love. It is joy, joy, joy.

It is happiness for Eternity, As he gave his life for me.

It is happiness for Eternity, As he gave his life for me.

" Song "

124

DREAMS ARE MADE TO BE BROKEN

by

George J. Peters

January 12, 1999 

Dreams are made to be broken, that's what happened to me.

Dreams are made to be broken , I don't want to be free.

My world was built on your love dear, the love that I thought you had.

Dreams are made to be broken, you lied and now I am sad.

I tried to make you gay dear, but it was all in vain,

I know I love you dear, so I'll take all the blame.

Dreams are made to be broken, that's what happened to me.

Dreams are made to be broken, I don't want to be free.

MY WIFE  
by  
George J. Peters  
January 12, 1999 ©

It hurt so much to say goodbye as I watched them put her in the ground.  
My heart just broke in two though the end of her pain had been found.  
She was the love of my heart, she was my angel from on high,  
I wanted us never to be apart, I never thought I'd be saying goodbye.  
I'm thinking tonight of my sweetheart who was taken away from me,  
And of that day when we'll be together where we will spend all of eternity.  
Many times in the past I had hurt her, some times harsh words I had said.  
Never realizing how quickly she would leave me, never knowing how soon she'd be dead  
I think of the times I made her cry, I never knew her to complain of this life.  
Sometimes I really wonder why? She's gone this lady who was my wife.  
I can picture her face here before me, when ever I feel so alone and so lost.  
I'm looking for a meaning that I might see, why there was such a terrible cost.  
The things I did, I did because I loved her. The things I do now are to honor her life.  
I will never in this life forget her, This lady who I called my Wife.

FREEDOM  
by  
George J. Peters  
January 20 1999 ©

What is freedom ? Is it a way to live ? Is it something to get or something to give ?

Is it invisible or can it be seen ? Or is it something on which we lean ?

Is it something from deep in my heart ? Or is it a legend of which I take part ?

When we earn it and we start to live, will they look at our past or really forgive ?

Is freedom so precious it can be misused ? We know from history it has been abused.

If you don't know and can't make a decision, you might ask someone who has been in prison.

It must mean something or we wouldn't fight, for these things we want and feel are right.

You see freedom is not just a word to me, It's something I believe in and something I can see.

So let it be written and not in the hands of fate, you should be good and try not to hate.

Your freedom to you is as precious as gold, it's something you should keep and never be sold.

## REMEMBERING THE PAST

by

George J. Peters

December 28, 1998 @

As I gaze through the window at the stars overhead,  
I think of the past that I thought was gone and dead.  
At the things that had happened so very long ago,  
They come before me now like a motion picture show.  
I remember North Carolina such a beautiful place,  
That was where I first saw my darling wife's face.  
When I first met her I was both bashful and shy,  
I really couldn't speak and I didn't know why.  
It was during the fall ,the dress she wore was a light pink  
In my eyes she was a movie star all dressed up in pink.  
Her hair was fairly short she was cute, cuddly and small.  
It was actually late summer, the beginning of fall.  
I was in the Marine Corps stationed in Cherry Point at the time,  
When I first met her I felt that someday she would be mine.  
We went to movies and other times we would just go for a walk,  
We were so much in love that we could just sit and talk.  
One night at a drive in movie I asked her to be my wife,  
I wanted to be with her for all the rest of my life.  
She said, " I will marry you because I love you too."  
We went to a minister who made our dreams come true .  
The song " I love you truly" is the song we had them play,

There was no better song suited for our wedding day.  
Two weeks of happiness were all that we could share,  
My orders read far east and soon I would have to be there.  
I was over seas for a year which seemed a long time to me,  
Korea was not the place where I really wanted to be.  
Thousands of miles from my darling far away from my home,  
I knew by her letters she also felt so terribly alone.  
The time went by slowly then back home I came,  
But I wasn't the person who left my mind wasn't the same.  
I would get headaches that hurt so much I wanted to cry,  
Then one night I wrecked my car I believe I wanted to Die.  
I sent my wife to North Carolina far away from me,  
Sent her back to her home where I thought she could be free.  
I might have been back in the US but my mind wasn't right,  
I was suffering from something that I didn't know how to fight.  
For over a year I was lost and I just wandered around,  
But I worked my way out of it and got my legs back on the ground.  
I got back together with my wife then what did I do?  
Came up with something that put us in jail, I was such a fool.  
Through the years we've both turned our lives another way,  
We care more about others and realize crime could never pay.  
She recently passed away leaving me to face this world all alone,  
She was my inspiration ,my life and now I'm lost alone in our home.

MY FATHER  
by  
George J. Peters  
January 12, 1999 

There is a beautiful casket, sitting on a metal stand.  
And inside of that casket sleeps a very handsome man.  
Bring the list of names my sister, read them to me as I cry.  
I have often tried but could not, for the tears they blind my eyes.  
Read who has came to see him, Who has came to say goodbye?  
Then answer me one question, Why did he have to die?  
Oh, the nights are now much darker, and the days are darker still,  
You see, I loved my father dearly, And I know I always will.  
Read the names of those who've seen him, read them to me as I cry.  
Then steady me as I whisper to him a last goodbye.  
Now there is a beautiful casket sitting on a metal stand,  
And inside of that casket sleeps a very handsome man.



22 East 60th Street  
NEW YORK, N. Y.



22 EAST 60TH STREET  
NEW YORK CITY

# GIVE DOGS AND DOLLARS

It gives us great pleasure to enclose herewith your certificate of appreciation from the Quartermaster General of the United States Army. Your patriotic response to our appeal for dogs has made it possible for Dogs For Defense, Inc., to meet the Armed Forces' present requirements of over fifteen hundred dogs per month.

HARRY I. CAESAR, President

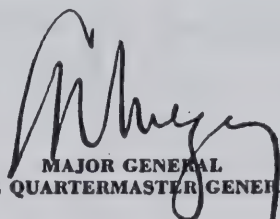
114 N. Cowan St.  
Garrettsville - Ind.



WAR DEPARTMENT  
OFFICE OF THE QUARTERMASTER GENERAL  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

\_\_\_\_\_  
EARNEST PETERS

*Appreciation is expressed for your patriotic action in  
donating your dog \_\_\_\_\_ PAT \_\_\_\_\_ for use in  
connection with the Armed Forces of the United States*

  
MAJOR GENERAL  
THE QUARTERMASTER GENERAL

Nº 13775

WAR DEPARTMENT  
WAR DOG RECEPTION AND TRAINING CENTER  
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

IN REPLY REFER TO:

FFA/jd  
FORT ROBINSON, NEBRASKA  
19 February 1944

Mr. Earnest Peters,  
114 North Cowan Street,  
Garrett, Indiana.

Dear Mr. Peters:

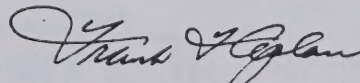
It is with sincere regret that we must inform you that your dog Pat, Indiana 951, Preston Brand Number H229, died 18 February 1944.

We share with you the grief pursuant to the loss of your pet. All dogs become of very personal interest to us, and when, on rare occasions, we lose one, it is a matter of real concern to all of the staff.

Our only comfort lies in the fact that, while in service, your dog's conduct was such as to bring credit to both himself and to you as his owner.

We regret that we are unable to give you additional details and feel sure you will appreciate that the interest of military secrecy will be best served by withholding further information.

Yours truly,

  
FRANK F. APLAN,  
2nd Lt., Q.M.C.,  
Adjutant.

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## 133 Y SCOUT NEWS

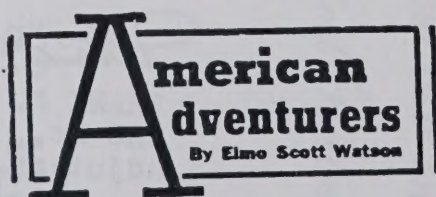
Several new members recently joined the troop. They are Robert Hensinger, James Witherspoon, Dennis Casey, David Travis, Marvin Woodcock, Robert Foster, Danny McPheeters, Robert Nodine, Richard Clark, James Martin, Robert Haynes, George Peters and Wayne Reed. These boys are working on their Tenderfoot tests.

Last Sunday afternoon Scouts Robert Baumgardner, Evan Roberts, Fred Roberts, Wm. Leech, John Green, Richard Wilcoxson, Kent Gordon, Wm. Loomis and Tom Jackson, under the leadership of Assistant Scoutmaster Raymond Souder, hiked to Mr. and Mrs. Allen's farm and worked on pioneering merit badge, constructing a bridge across a wide ditch. A similar hike will be held this Sunday, meeting at the Scout cabin at 1:30. Scouts who wish to do cooking, come prepared. Bring hatchets or axes for pioneering work.

Last Monday evening the troop board of review, consisting of John Leech, R. C. Stevens and Raymond Souder, met and reviewed Scouts Billy Stevens for Bronze Eagle Palm and Kent Gordon and Harold Soudah for Star rank.

Tests passed recently include — Home Repair merit badge, Douglas Zimmerman; Public Health, Kent Gordon and Wm. Lewis; Cooking merit badge, Kent Gordon, George Mayfield and Richard Best; Personal Health, Kent Gordon; Mapping, Glenn Warfield and Ned Zimmerman; and Thrift, Ned Zimmerman.

Boys twelve years of age are eligible to join the scouts. Registration fee is 50 cents. Scout manual costs 65 cents and the dues are 5 cents per week. A corps of skilled scouters take care of all meetings and give instruction and help quiz scouts for test passing.



### Bad Boy of the Mayflower

AMONG the Pilgrim Fathers who came over on the Mayflower was John Billington, accompanied by his wife and two sons, Francis and John Jr. Early in that historic voyage young John disgraced himself. While playing in the family's cabin with his father's fowling piece, he fired the weapon close to an open keg of powder. "Only the Lord's mercy saved the ship and the entire company from being blown to pieces," writes a pious

## DRIVE AGAINST RATS PLANNED IN THIS COUNTY

County Agent C. R. Gross announced Tuesday that plans have been made to distribute prepared red squill bait to kill rats at the same time throughout DeKalb county. Friday, Nov. 12, is the day set for this effort. Twelve counties on North-eastern Indiana are combining their efforts on the same day.

In urging farmers and townspeople to co-operate in destroying rats, Mr. Gross points out that rats travel from one property to another. By baiting all properties at one time it is possible to greatly reduce the infestation. Action now will prevent large property losses and great annoyance from those pests during the coming winter.

Prepared bait will be made available to everyone on a non-profit basis only for the one-day campaign. Distributors in every trade center in the county are as follows:

Auburn—Auburn Grain company, Farm Bureau Co-op, Auburn Hatchery & Feed Mill, Extension Office, court house.

Newville store.

Hopewell store.

Spencerville elevator.

Garrett—Farm Bureau and Garrett Clipper office.

Butler—Longaker mill, Farm Bureau elevator, Bercaw Implement store.

St. Joe—St. Joe News office and

Myers elevator.

Corunna—Stonebraker Hardware. Ashley—Ashley Feed Mill and Seagle's General Store.

Waterloo—Fretz Hatchery and Longaker Mill.

Commenting on the poisons used for rat control, Mr. Gross says that red squill is the safest poison known. It comes from the near east. On the market it comes in a powder made from a lily-like bulb. It is a botanical second cousin of the blue squill that is one of the early spring flowers in some gardens. A poison to rats, it has been used, in very small doses, as a human medicine. Syrup of squill is a popular croup remedy. Red squill that is available as a rat poison contains an emetic that causes vomiting when taken by cats, dogs and human beings. Rats are unable to vomit and red squill causes death usually within 24 hours.

The poison called ANTU which was developed during the war properly known as Alphanaphthylthiourea. It is very deadly to the common brown rat, cats, dogs and hogs. Tests of ANTU indicate that it is not very hazardous to chickens and human beings.

### Floating Cutter Bar

The two-wheel mower with the floating cutter bar appeared on the market in 1855.

### School for the Deaf

Alexander Graham Bell, Scottish educator, arrived in the United States by way of Canada in 1871. 1872 he opened in Boston a school for the deaf and others with defective speech.

## MRS. RICHARD HIGGINS

announces the opening of

# Tiny Tots Toggery

711 North Randolph Street — Garrett

## Friday, October 15

Come see our complete line of

## INFANTS' APPAREL — TOYS

SHOWER GIFTS



